



# Historical Society of Decatur County

## The Bulletin

Vol. 11 No. 1

Spring 2006

Greensburg, Indiana

“Human history is in essence a history of ideas.”

- H.G Wells

**Annual Dinner:**  
**February 18th**  
**See Pages 2 & 7**  
**for details!**

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**Henry H. Talbott**  
**Greensburg Standard**  
**Thursday Morning**  
**August 1, 1872**

Died at the Insane Asylum in Indianapolis, on Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1872, Henry H. Talbott, in the 73<sup>rd</sup> year of his age.\*\*

Mr. Talbott was born in Lincoln County, Kentucky, in March, 1800, and immigrated to Decatur County in 1821, before its organization.

The first public record to be found in our Clerk’s office was made before Martin Adkins and John Fugit, associate Judges of the county, on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1822, and is as follows:

“This day Henry H. Talbott tendered to the Court his several bonds as Clerk of the Circuit Court and Recorder of Decatur county, with Thomas Hendricks and William Ross sureties: when Joseph A. Hopkins moved the Court to reject said bonds on the ground that said Talbott was eligible to said

offices; and the Court after said motion and approves said bonds.”

From this time forward he discharged the duties of Clerk, Auditor and Recorder until August, 1851, when he was succeeded by Andrew Dyer as Auditor – and until 1855 when he was succeeded by Putnam Ewing as Recorder, and until 1859 when he was succeeded by Richard C. Talbott as Clerk – having been Auditor 20 years, Recorder 33 years and Clerk 37 years. He was displaced from office by reason of the Constitutional provision adopted in 1851, rendering a person ineligible to these offices for more than eight years in a period of twelve years.

He was assisted in the discharge of the duties of his several offices by the following deputies: John R. Ross, Corey Brown, James M. Talbott, Richard C. Talbott, Peter McHargh, Philander Hamilton, Samuel L. Hopkins, and the writer of this notice, each of whom served for a long period of time.

He was married to Eliza Hendricks soon after his election as Clerk, and she departed this life in 1860.

He was a Democrat until the trouble between Clay and Jackson, when he became a Whig, and since that has been a Whig and Republican, although never a bitter partisan, as is shown by the fact that a majority of his deputies were Democrats.

In his days the art of taxing costs was not reduced to an extortionate science, and as a consequence he never accumulated a surplus of means. He has a disposition to speculate, and by paying the producers of our county a round price for their stock managed to keep himself poor and die in poverty.

In all his business transactions he was scrupulously honest, and whenever a doubt existed as to any transaction he always allowed the other party the benefit of the doubt. We cannot recall any person who was and is his contempor



HENRY H. TALBOTT MONUMENT AT  
SOUTH PARK CEMETERY

#### INVITATION Annual Dinner

**When:** Saturday, February 18th

**Where:** First Presbyterian Church  
Time: 6:00 p.m.

**Cost:** \$10.00 per person

Program: Tom Barker will present a very interesting new program called "Greensburg In the 1940's On 8mm Film." Tom will also be showing excerpts from two documentaries he is currently working on, "The Class of 1950" and "Greensburg Kiwanis Club 1941." Some of the film is in color, all of it is fantastic. The 1941 film will be available on DVD later this year. Tom hopes to have the "Class of 1950" available for purchase the night of the Annual Meeting, but that may not be possible.

Send your check for this exciting dinner and program to:

Historical Society, Annual Dinner  
P.O. Box 163,  
Greensburg, IN 47240



Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian practices at the Greensburg Junior High School with Mr. Parcell and the Junior High Ensemble for the October 5th Sunday event "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

### Henry H. Talbott (cont. from page 1)

rary through all the scenes of his Decatur county life, except Abram Hendricks.

He leaves a large family of children who are all well situated in life – and above all he leaves a history of the county.

He lived to see his early associates gone; the scenes of his pioneer life supplanted by an advanced civilization, and for the last few years of his life himself demented, and yet shattered as his intellect was, the kind impulses of his generous nature carried him into acts of childlike af-

fection for those whom he remembered with kindness in the days of his prosperity.

Knowing that dissolution was approaching he went to his lot in the cemetery shortly before his death and designated the spot where his grave was to be dug by measuring it with his own body stretched upon the ground by the side of the grave of that noble woman – his wife—whose memory too will never be forgotten by those who knew her.

His memory will be cherished by those con-

nected with him in the affairs of his life, and his life of perfect honesty is pointed to by his friends as an example worthy of a continual effort to follow.\*

\*Note, this is a first in a series of Obits about some of the early settlers and some later well-known men and women who were buried in this county, they are the ones who helped shape Decatur County into what we have today.

\*\*Henry Talbott is buried in South Park Cemetery, not more than 15 feet from Thomas Hendricks grave site.

*Edited by Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian, Oct. 2005*

### Fifth Sunday *by reed schuster*

The Grand Finale of the 2005 season of the Fifth Sunday Musicals came to a snowy close December 10th and 11th – however it didn't stop over 300 train lovers attending the train fair. The Indy train club brought their working Lionel train display and Eastern Pacific RR model - and Santa.

The yellow bus from Batesville delivered the unbelievable young, handsomely costumed Batesville singers. Their music of the season was delightful. Before the Batesville Singers - Pat Hicks with harp and Jane Link with flute made musical sounds to remember.

All the above - Sunday afternoon, December 11<sup>th</sup> while the Train Fair proceeded downstairs!

The first Fifth Sunday of the 2005 season, the memorable Mossberg strings, was followed by the October Halloween presentation by the Greensburg Junior High School Musical Ensemble with our very own Decatur County Historian, Russell Wilhoit. In the words of the French - Magnifique Musical Season!

Now it's time for thank yous. The sponsors, the underwriters, the patrons and other unnamed hundreds like Dennis Wilson, the lectern mover, the people counter, the usher, the hostess, the musical cleaner uppers, and a hundred more - thank yous in case we forgot you.

The writer has always had a "thing" about centered table cloths – so doing the punch table, etc., the cloth was slick, the table waxed – you know - when the silver vases were filled and the train put around the punch bowl – I stepped back to check the table cloths – Disaster!! The cloth on the punch table had slid off center. (continued)

## Fifth Sunday

(continued) So I pinned it crooked. By then the guests were arriving so it wasn't the greatest but, oh well, the punch was good. The volunteers' cookies were really good. Mrs. Pike's bread pudding was grand as always. Hopefully with all the guests, most of them anyway, they may not have even seen the cock-eyed tablecloth.

The usher came by at this time and handed me two black top hats filled with money. We have grossed over \$3,000 for HSDC with over \$1,000 just for the 2005 season.

If you have time, see the antique top hats we used for the collection. In 2003 we used fake straw Sailor hats, plastic at that. One of our board members thought we should use the old top hats from the Museum collection.

It was agreed – another board member said – the black beaver hats would be great—they hold more!

And so the Fifth Sunday rests while the whole Historical Society of Decatur County looks forward to 2007 – most don't forget – the First Presbyterian Church same time 2:30 p.m. Fifth Sunday – see you there and thank you for helping.

By the way – with some of the proceeds from Fifth Sunday Musicals – we now have a copier of our own. Thank you again. Oh yes, the old black polished beaver top hats are being stored waiting to see the light of day in 2007.



### ***Under God***

**A book review by George Granholt**

Rosa Parks died on October 24, 2005. There were untold numbers of eulogies, attributions to her role in the Civil Rights Movement, testimonials to her personal convictions and courage, and praise for her simplicity of manner in all the major media in the nation. Rosa Parks's quotations abounded, but perhaps the most revealing appears in this book compiled by Toby Mac and Michael Tate. In describing her moments on the bus, she later wrote, "I felt the presence of God...and heard His quiet voice as I sat there waiting for the police to take me to the station. There were people on the bus that knew me, but no one said a word to help or encourage me. I was lonely, but I was at peace. The voice of God told me that He was at my side."

This anecdote is one of sixty brief accounts about the faith of those who have enhanced the heritage which is the legacy of all Americans. There are stories about the great personages in American history, including Samuel Adams, Daniel Webster, and Abraham Lincoln; there are also stories about individuals most Americans have never heard of: Elizabeth Van Lew, Theodore Weld, and Olaudah Equiano, for example. Addenda to these inspirational stories include a complete index, a readable time line, and a comprehensive bibliography.

The unique cover format also prompts immediate attention. The editor recommends the book for readers of any age, but it would make an excellent gift for the teenage boy or girl. Additionally of interest is that Decatur County native Philip Peters notes, "I [had only] a small part in [the production of the book], but really enjoyed the stories and learned some as well." The book can be ordered from Rainbow Books and Gifts in Greensburg.

### **Lincoln**

A poem by Grant Henderson

Along the line of march he hewed  
From deepest wilderness to field  
Of action he has left for us  
A story of success revealed,  
Unparalleled. The scroll he wrote  
Across the ages will not be  
Erased, though eons pass, until  
The end of time. No agony  
Can mar the lesson he engraved  
Upon our hearts. We bow in awe  
Before the creeds he justified,  
We practice his immortal law.  
He came from valley and ravine  
With hand uplifted; with a cry,  
He charged into the border that stood  
Aside to watch a nation die.  
With Arm as strong as gnarled oak  
He faced the foe he loved, and God  
Acknowledged the paternal prayer,  
The father with reproving rod.  
And nations, touched with reverence,  
Beheld the miracle and stood  
Abased before the man who strove  
To bind the world in brotherhood.  
When he went down a giant fell.  
He shook the world from pole to pole.  
He sleeps; but men must strive until  
Peace comes to his unquiet soul.

## William Grant Henderson

Landscape nurseryman, Naturalist, Poet *by Charity Mitchell*

Grant Henderson is remembered as a local Decatur County author. We are fortunate in having a poet describe and depict a place, a time, and his personal feelings and thoughts about life at one time. A rather long time as many of his poems relate to the period between 1910 and 1970. Most of our local, written historical records are either statistical or consist of lists of names and dates. It takes a poet, a creative writer, a diarist, or an historian to make the past personal and alive. Grant Henderson presents a personal view of the world in which he lived around Enochburg from ca. 1910 to the 1960's through his four books of poetry and one novel: *Sunset in Enochburg*. He continued Eggleston's tradition in the *Hoosier Schoolmaster* of using dialect in his works to relay to the reader the flavor of the speech in a particular time and place.

He was born in Cincinnati, December 20, 1906, the son of William W. and Cora Henderson. He attended public school in Franklin and Decatur Counties. On February 8, 1933, he married Edna Gabbard in Brookville and lived most of his life around Enochburg. They had three children: Lowell Henderson, William Henderson, and Faye Buell (Mrs. Fred Buell). He did a variety of jobs: landscaping, tree trimming, farm work, highway construction work, and running a mail order business selling native ornamental and medicinal plants. He was known as a nurseryman, a naturalist, a botanist, and a poet.

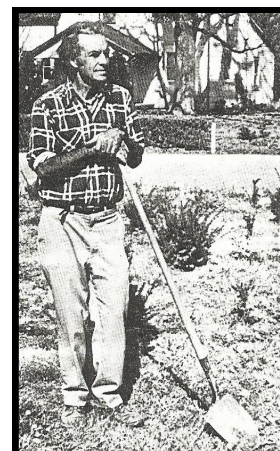
His interest in poetry was partially due to his father who liked to make rhymes. Grant won first place in a state poetry contest sponsored by Poets' Corner, Inc. in 1948 and was a member of the Poet's Corner of Indianapolis and the Shramrock Poetry Club. His books of poetry are: *Song of the Woodlark*, Greensburg, Ind., 1957; *Four-Square Lines*, Greensburg, Ind., 1962; *The Shack*, Greensburg, Ind., 1966; and *The Lament at Carver Llay*, Westport, Ind., 1968. Many of the poems in *Song of the Woodlark* were published in newspapers and poetry magazines. The poems in this collection are a mixture of narrative poems, 4 lines or quatrains, some with dialect, etc. on a variety of topics. There is an interesting one about meeting people again in Enochburg after a long time and experiencing the feeling of time passing and changes being made without your realizing them (*A Fable of Enochburg*). His nature poetry is descriptive as in *April Woodland*. He also has written some poems about historical characters: *The Living Ann Rutledge* for example. He also wrote about local people and places in *North from Enochburg to Bueny*, *Salt Crick*, and *The Bells of Enochburg*. *Four-Square Lines* is exactly what it says: quatrains with an interesting, amusing, and perhaps a cynical twist at the end. Two examples are numbers 64 and 79.

At first I did not understand the praise  
He heaped upon me, but I searched for ways  
To measure his sincerity. It pays  
To comprehend. I asked him for a "raise."

Wars aren't made by fools like you and me,  
But by the men who are proclaimed to be  
The wisest in the world. Ingloriously  
We die to nurse a flagrant fallacy.

His personal interests were evident in the organizations to which he belonged: Indiana Historical Society, The Decatur County

Historical Society, the Indiana Audubon Society, Wilson Ornithological Club and the local conservation clubs. Politically he was considered an independent and in religion he considered himself an "uncomplicated Christian." He enjoyed reading and by the late 60's he had a library of over 5500 volumes. He particularly enjoyed reading biography. History, also, had a particular interest for him especially the Civil War. He was elected chairman of the Decatur County Civil War Centennial Commission in 1960 and served as President of the Decatur County Historical Society in 1967 and 1968. A poem of his on Lincoln was published in the Decatur County Historical Society Bulletin, volume 1, no. 9, 1961.



Grant Henderson

(See "Lincoln" on page 3)

In 1967 his novel, *Sunset in Enochburg*, was published. In it he tells the tale of little boy living ca. 1910 on a farm near Enochburg through the mind of the boy using the dialect of the time and place. The book does give a feeling of how isolated from towns people were at this time and how going into Enochburg was an exciting trip for a child. In a day when everyone can get into a car and drive 50 to a hundred miles or more in a day without thinking about it, it is difficult to imagine what life was like before the car. This book enables you to do so and to see a natural world that has been gone for approximately 80 years.

He died in Greensburg at the age of 76 on November 17, 1983, leaving the legacy of his work and writings to enable us to understand and enjoy another time.

**Bibliography:**

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**Towns and Villages of Decatur County:**

**Reprints of Articles from early Twentieth Century Papers**

Compiled and Edited by Russell Wilhoit

This article on Clarksburg was first printed in the Greensburg Standard, Oct. 10, 1913.

Where possible it is typed word for word from the original document to give the reader the true feeling of the period.

Editor's note:

The Clarksburg High School was torn down around 1975-76 and most of the buildings written about in this story are no longer standing. In some cases it is not clear where they actually stood.

Cemetery information is marked by asterisks in the text of the article.

\*Buried in Clarksburg Cemetery, Fugit Township

\*\*Buried in Springhill Cemetery, Fugit Township

\*\*\*Buried in Kingston Cemetery, Fugit Township

\*\*\*\*Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Fugit Township

**Clarksburg of Long Ago**

It was James Wiley who built the first house on the present site of Clarksburg – a log cabin, one room with its puncheon floor, stick and mud chimney, chicken and mud between the logs to stop the cracks, greased paper for window lights and its rude door, latch and string; and it was this same Mr. Wiley, who on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1820, entered the first land in Fugit township—one hundred sixty acres in section one, township eleven, range ten.

The original old log hut of a home of Mr. Wiley's stands in the town today, and is the residence of Mrs. Malinda Young (\*\*\*\* 1841-1924) and daughter, Miss Lucy. The house has been remodeled and weather boarded, and does not resemble in the least a log hut. It stands on Main street and just east of the bank building.

Soon after Mr. Wiley built his log cabin his two sons became lost in the dense woods near by, and one of them perished and was found dead beside his brother, who was exhausted, so near starved to death and in such a weakened condition that he could not

stand alone. He and his dead brother were found by an old hunter and trapper by the name of Joseph Weston, and by the aid of others the dead body of the one and the helpless form of the other were conveyed back to the sad home of the parents.

It was on the first day of March, 1819, that John Fugit, Griffey Griffets and Elias Jarrett "smoked their last pipe of peace" amid the grand old hills and hollows of Franklin county and "set sail" for the woodlands in the vicinity of Clarksburg and settled near the present site of town, and the dispute as to which of them was first settler may be forever set at rest, on account of the well authenticated fact that all three of them came at one and the same time.

Mr. Fugit later became justice of the peace, and still later on he was elected one of the first Associate Judges of the Circuit Court. In the year 1825, he moved to Clay township and from there to Milford, where he died in 1844.

In the year 1827, Clarksburg was organized and laid out by Woodson Clark, (\*Death date unknown) grandfather of James B. Clark, at present a resident of the town. Mr. Clark was the originator and founder of the town, which now bears his name. He received the land from the Government and divided it into lots, giving a lot, or lots, free of any cost to men who would locate here and develop industries, and his project brought forth fruit in great abundance in the way of many valuable and desirable industries, for soon thereafter the ring of the blacksmith's hammer and anvil, the never ceasing noises of factories, the humming of grist, lumber and saw mills, the merry buzz of the weaver's loom and numerous other enterprises intermingled with the murmuring forest that ere many moons barbarianism gave way to civilization, hunting replaced by labor and all things began to work in harmony to build up the little town.

Seventy-five years ago a hat factory was operated by John Tilford in an old log building located where the school house now stands. He committed suicide by hanging

himself in a barn; domestic trouble of a serious nature was the cause assigned.

Back in the mystic realms of time, back in the years 1829-30, that have so long gone by, when leather shoes were quite a novelty and wooden shoes predominated. David Martin, (\*\*1794-1870) Frank Henderson and John Lindsey created an innovation by the manufacture of leather shoes by the wholesale. Their "factories" occupied log cabins on the lots which now have erected on them the Miller boarding house, the H. C. Doles residence and the H. C. Doles & Son hardware store – all on Main street. They had all sizes of the wooden last, and copper for putting "copper toes" on the children's shoes, wild hog bristles by the barrel, bees wax by the quart, shoe thread by the thousand yards, wax ends "without end," shoe hammers by the dozen and pegging awls by the half gallon. The demand for "real leather shoes: in those days was fully equal to the supply and these men who conducted the "handmade shoe" factory did a lucrative business for some time.

During the "sixties" a factory for making sausage grinders was one of the town's enterprises.

The first grist mill was operated on site of the present mill of C. B. Emmert in 1832, by a Mr. Howard, and later was destroyed by fire, while later the ground was bought by Jacob Emmert who erected a mill thereon in 1863. In the year 1870 Mr. Emmert added a saw and planing mill to his grist mill. Long years and the scarcity of timber did away with the saw and planing mill, and up-to-date flouring mill is now operated by C. B. Emmert, son of Jacob Emmert, who bought the mill from his father.

Phillip Hoffman successfully carried on the manufacture of carriages, buggies, and wagons in the years 1840-50.

Everett & Bloomfield's addition to the town was laid off in 1857, and called "Texas." It was annexed to the town.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

A rope factory was one among the town's many enterprises in the long ago; but, tradition is too misty to present any absolute facts other than the fact of its once existence.

A Mr. West established a tanning factory here in 1850 and for a number of years did a thriving business.

Large carding woolen mills turned out cloth daily from their looms in the years 1835-40.

A Mr. Brown owned and operated the first general store in the town in 1840.

To Clarksburg belongs the honor of having the first school in the county. This historical school was taught in the winter of 1820.

Jonathan (called "Jaunta") Thompson (\*\*\*\* 1829-1905) manufactured both coffins and pumps in the "forties" and "fifties."

William M. Hamilton (\*\*\* 1822-1905) operated a tile factory here in the long ago and on an exceedingly large scale.

Quite an extensive chair factory was operated by William Burris along in the "forties."

Isaac Shumm, father of A. C. Shumm, conducted a tailoring establishment in 1850.

One of the log cabins that graced the town in ye olden time is now the home of A. C. Shumm, and was built by his father, Issac Shumm. It too, was remodeled, weather boarded and made to resemble a frame residence. It stands on Main street.

The Clarksburg neighborhood was visited by a terrible hurricane in 1836, which did great damage to building and timber.

### Clarksburg of Today- 1913

With the high tide of a religious, moral and educational spirit prevailing, and uppermost in the hearts and minds of the people of the town, we first refer to her

### Churches

The churches of the town have a most interesting history, but is entirely too voluminous to be given in this article.

The Presbyterian church is a neat, substantial frame building and services are conducted each Sunday by Rev. Homer Campbell.

The Methodist church is in charge of Rev. J. E. Sidebottom, who preaches to the congregation every Sunday. The church building is a well constructed frame, and is centrally located in the town.

The Christian church congregation is without a regular pastor at present, though they have preaching nearly every Sunday by someone who comes on "trial" and is seeking the pastorate of the church. This house of worship is also frame and an excellent building.

### Schools

Next to the churches come the schools in the hearts of the Clarksburg people, and to show their great appreciation of education they donated, in 1876, between five and six hundred dollars of their personal funds toward the erection of a school building in the town.

The present building\*\* was erected in 1909, and cost, including its inside equipments and furnishings, in the neighborhood of thirty-five thousand dollars. It is located near the north end of the beautifully shaded grounds, leaving room for a large baseball diamond in the south end and a playground for the small children in the north end of the school yards. It is a two story brick with stone foundation; slate roof; heated by steam; has four elegant rooms on first floor; large basement under entire first floor, a part of which is neatly and conveniently arranged for and used by the domestic science department, and is one of the best equipped departments we have yet visited. In it are natural gas, cooking utensils, ovens, a series of cupboards, and in fact everything that goes to make up and complete a first-class domestic science department. In the basement are also a children's play room, toilets for both boys and girls, and tons of coal with which to feed the boilers in event the natural gas should give out.

On the second floor are two school rooms, the superintendent's office, laboratory, large auditorium equipped with stage fourteen by twenty-five feet, piano, chairs, and the room is also equipped for basketball. The laboratory deserves special mention because of the fact that its equipment is far above the average, containing, with other things, the Columbia cabinet, a complete physical apparatus.

The school has a splendid library, and an addition of one hundred books is to be added in the very near future.

An athletic association is also one of the school's features, and is officered as follows: President, Allan Emmert; secretary, Orpha Newman;(\*\* 1896-1915) treasurer, Glen Grose. A scholarship average of eighty percent, and, not below seventy-five, is required before any pupil can compete in team work.

Basketball teams are now being formed—one for the boys and one for the girls.

### The Instructors

Prof. R. H. Kenady is principal of the High school, with Miss Mary Robison and Miss Naomi Kirk assistants. Prof. Kenady teaches science and mathematics; Miss Robison - history and English, and Miss Kirk - Latin, music and drawing. In the High school are thirty-three students.

Room four, grades seven and eight, Mrs. M. B. Snyder teacher: number of pupils, twenty.

Room three, grades five and six, Miss Dell McCracken teacher: number of scholars, twenty-one.

Room two, grades three and four, Miss Blanch Donnell teacher: number of scholars, thirty-three.

Room one, grades one and two, Miss Lucy Young teacher (\*\*\*\* 1878-1954) number of scholars, twenty-eight.

Total enrollment, one hundred thirty-five. Agricultural is taught the Freshmen boys by Prof. Kenady, and soon there will be added to this department a Babcock milk tester.

Domestic science is taught by Mrs. Mollie Snyder to the Freshman girls, and it is



Clarksburg store and Masonic Lodge built around 1870.

(Continued on page 7)

## The Bulletin

(Continued from page 6)

planned to advance the course as they advance grades.

In connection with both the agricultural and domestic science courses a series of patron meetings are being planned, the first of which will be held the last of this month. The object is to get the patrons more fully interested, and it is a splendid idea.

In the High school two hours each week are given to special training in music and two hours per week to instructions in drawing. Miss Naomi Kirk is the efficient instructor, and is giving double the amount of work and time required. She also gives three lessons per week in each one of the rooms in music and drawing.

The corps of instructors in the Clarksburg school are among Decatur county's best, and in no school building in the state is there more perfect harmony between teachers and superintendent than here in Clarksburg's schools - with them it is "a long pull, a strong pull and a pull together" and that will bring most gratifying results to all concerned, and is certainly doing it now, for the writer had not long been in Clarksburg until he learned that Prof. Kenady had won the hearts of patrons and pupils alike with his devotedness to the schools and his exceptional ability as an instructor and manager.

#### Lecture Course

Clarksburg maintains a lecture course of six numbers, and of a very high order. There have been two hundred twenty-five season tickets sold, and generally there are a large number of single admission tickets purchased. This speaks loud praise of the cultured and refined people of the little town.

#### Secret Orders

Clarksburg is well supplied with secret orders for a town of her size, as she has a Masonic lodge with a membership of near fifty, and the brethren own the hall in which they meet.

The Odd Fellows own a magnificent business block in which they have their lodge room, and have a membership of near one hundred.

The Red Men have a membership of sixty-

five and own the hall in which they "kindle the fire."

#### State Bank

The Clarksburg State Bank is one of the permanent and valuable fixtures of the town, and is doing a prosperous and perfectly safe business. Its Last report shows individual time and demand deposits to total the magnificent sum of one hundred and ten thousand, four hundred and forty-four dollars and thirty-eight cents.

The following named gentlemen compose its officers: Charles V. Spencer, president; W. J. Kincaid, vice president; (\*\*1854-1933) and A. T. Brock, cashier. The directors are C. V. Spencer, W. J. Kincaid, E. S. Fee, (\*\*\*) 1863-1934) C. M. Beall, (\*\* 1854-1938) A. C. Shumm, (\*1857-1927) O. L. Miller, E. F. Hellmich, and A. T. Brock.

While Clarksburg has had in her time, about everything, be it said to her great honor and glory, she has never had a saloon. She has, however, an enterprising population, who annually put on a great corn and poultry show, with an occasional street carnival.

#### Business Enterprises

The various business enterprises of Clarksburg are given below together with the managers' names:

Jacob Senior, general store

Mrs. Emma Schumm, millinery, \* born 1872- died 1930

Mrs. Martha Walters, telephone exchange

C. Schumm, drugs, books, etc., \* born 1857- died 1927

J. L. Burns, harness, saddlery, \* born 1852 - died 1928

Zachariah Russell & Co., general merchandise, \* born 1850 - died 1916

Dr. Will Thomas, physician and surgeon

Charles Buchanan, tonsorial artist

George Davis, hack and livery barn, \* born 1859 -died 1920's

Jackson & Son, livery and feed stable

"The Budgett", printing office by Cliff McCracken-, \*\* born 1889 - died 1918

David Higgins, general store

Dr. C. M. Beall, physician and surgeon, \*\* born 1854 - died 1938

Clarksburg State Bank

E. Freeland, restaurant

Charles L. Brown, general blacksmith, \*\*\* born 1876 - died 1957

E. Alexander, Veterinary Surgeon

E. E. Whitten, carriage painter

J. E. Brodie, general blacksmith

C. B. Emmert, flouring mill

W. W. Grose, blacksmithing

J. E. Hite, merchant tailor

H. C. Doles & Son, hardware and implements

James Moore, carpenter

Dr. Prosser E. Clark, physician and surgeon

Mrs. Martha Miller, boarding house

Alexander Burns, house and sign painter, \* born 1845 - died 1926

C. B. Harrell, Jeweler

Waldo McGuire, pool room

L. M. Hite, house and sign painter

Peter Christy, shoe repair shop

James Linville, meat market

#### An Expression of Gratitude

The News representative is greatly indebted to Mrs. Rhoda K. Ewick(\*\*1834-1916) for valuable information contained in the above "write up."

Mrs. Ewick is the oldest native born citizen residing in Clarksburg today. She will be seventy-nine years of age in December and enjoys real good health for one of her mature years. May her declining years be her happiest.

To Alvin C. Shumm and J. L. Burns we tender our thanks also for valuable information and assistance in gathering facts.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY DAVID MIERS

### CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION UPDATE:

As I write this letter to you I'm very pleased to report that we are a little bit ahead of the construction schedule that was set at the being of our project. With the open winter we have been experiencing we have been able to complete a lot of the exterior work. All of the brick and blocks have been "laid up" and look very beautiful. The roof has been put on and the guttering and down spouts are in place (they will be painted when it is warmer). If you haven't had a chance, drive through the First Federal Savings and Loan parking lot and look at the building, which is quite impressive.

On the interior, old door ways have been reopened and new ones cut in the old home so now the process of connecting the two structures is starting to take place. We used a new product and technique for insulating the new building. It is a foam type insulation that is applied directly to the roof rafters and the sheeting under the roof. It's 8 inches thick and has an R-value of at least R-50. Also, we are told it will maintain that value for "hundreds of years." The display room has been designed with  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch plywood behind the dry wall so that we may attach anything to it and not have to ever worry about locating a stud. A lot of the heating and air conditioning ducts are in place, and most of the wiring has been run.

This structure will last many generations. How can I say that? Because it's possibly the best built structure in our community. The use of concrete block throughout, the pouring of the cells of the blocks with concrete, and then putting rebar every 16 inches in those cells, makes for a very strong structure. I've been told by the masons that, "if ever there is a tornado in Greensburg, we want to be in this building." We truly are building a wonderful structure and something we'll be proud of for a very long time. I look forward to updating you in future bulletins.

Our final Fifth Sunday Program was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of December, and even with the inclement weather, that weekend was quite successful. We will not be having these programs in 2006 as it is a project we do every other year. When you see Reed Schuster thank him for all he does to make this a very successful project of the Society. Thank you Reed.

On February 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the Presbyterian Church basement we will be holding our annual meeting. Thomas Barker will be presenting the program and has some interesting things to show us. Also, I have invited our architect Thomas Gordon Smith, and his wife, Mareca, to join us, and I have asked him to say a few words on his perspective of our building project. Please mark that date on your calendar and send in your reservations. We plan on seeing you there.

This is a very exciting time in our Society's history. Be sure to enjoy this with us.

David

Reservations for Annual Dinner

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner is \$10.00 per person

Number of reservations requested \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00 each

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*\*Reservations must be received by February 10th.



## The Bulletin

The Decatur County Historical Society is having reprints of the 1886 Map of Greensburg made. This reprint will be a copy of the map which hangs in the front hall of the museum. These will sell for \$15.00 a piece. If you would like to reserve a copy, please complete the following form:

I would like to reserve a copy of the 1886 Map of Greensburg. We will notify you when the copies are available. Do not send money.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: 1882 Map of Greensburg

Historical Society of Decatur County, PO Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240

Many thanks to the following businesses for selling cards, videos, and DVD's from the Historical Society:

Chamber of Commerce, Greensburg  
Camera & Photography, Margaret  
Tremain's Antiques, and Unique  
Gifts.

The Greensburg 1937 (VHS and DVD) and Greensburg 1959 films (VHS and DVD) are available at the Chamber of Commerce, Greensburg Camera, and Unique Gifts.

### A BIG Thank You!

The responsibility of composing the format of the Bulletin for the last several issues has been on the shoulders of

Heather Haunert. She willingly took over the task from Terri-Ann Blanton and has produced outstanding work. When readers remarked about the attractive appearance of the publication, it was Heather who deserved all the credit. Beginning with the Spring, '06 edition of the Bulletin, however, the publication will be composed in the Historical Society's office, since we now have a copier and software for the computer which will make this possible. The editor, the Historical Society Board, and all our members greatly appreciate Heather's commitment and expertise.



**THANK YOU,  
HEATHER!**

More good news...It may be late, but our 2005 Christmas ornament will come out in mid-summer. It will feature a reprint of a photograph of the Oddfellows' Home. We are still considering the topic for the 2006 ornament. We will let you know when and where to purchase these lovely collectibles.

What do you really know about the history and geography of Decatur County? For example: which township in Decatur County was the first township in Indiana to provide conveyance to school for students?

Please join Jane Brown as courier and speaker on a tour of Decatur County on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, 2006. It will take about six hours with lunch in Westport. If you would like to reserve a seat on this tour, please do so by sending a check to the Decatur County Historical Society for \$20.00

I would like to join the tour of Decatur County on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April. My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Tour of Decatur County

Historical Society of Decatur County

PO Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or RENEWAL**— Payable annually by January 1—P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240

Individual ... \$10.00 Family ... \$15.00 Contributor ... \$30.00 Life ... \$100.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State, ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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## "The Bulletin"

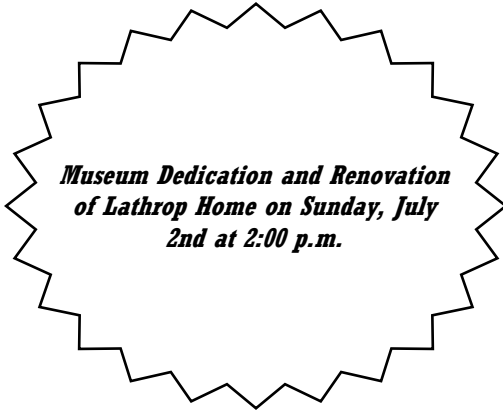


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# ***The Bulletin***

*Summer 2006*

*Epigraph - "I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies." - William Tyler*  
Page

## ***President's Letter***

by David Miers

The construction of our addition is moving rapidly to completion. The floors, woodwork, and trim have been installed, and the painting is nearing completion. The stairway and the elevator have also been installed as well as cabinets and other storage areas.

Our plan is to have the interior construction finished by May 1<sup>st</sup> and use the month of May to go through the "punch list" to make sure everything is finished to our and the architect's satisfaction. We will then have the month of June to move into our new building.

On the second floor, the Gallery is complete and it is quite impressive. It's inviting style, lighting fixtures, and tile flooring will remind you of what one might see in a Chicago or New York museum. General Contractor Jim Bruns stated "this is the nicest room I have done in my twenty five year career." It's a room that is begging to display our many items, and Charity Mitchell, Susan Rieke and Russell Wilhoit are ready and eager to start moving in.

In the house we have made changes in several of the rooms. Most noticeably, in the dining room we have removed the closet that was on the north wall and have returned the room to its original size. In the kitchen, dining room, and the gift shop (the old children's play room) dry wall has been installed to cover the cracks and imperfections that come with an older building. This new smooth surface is ready for fresh paint and wallpaper. So, in addition to moving in, we must also start to clean up the old house and begin to reorganize it. Charity, Susan and several other volunteers have spent all last fall and winter cataloging our current inventory of artifacts and recording information and pictures about each item on our computer – a daunting task to say the least. Be sure to thank them for their hard work.

The final item of construction I would like to share with you is that the Board has decided to renovate the front porch. As some of you know, the front porch has been a maintenance headache for many years. With the help and authenticity of an old photograph, we are returning the porch to how it looked in the 1900's. This will necessitate the demolition of the existing structure and starting from scratch. The new porch will return the house to the look and feel of that era.

A total restoration would not be complete until we paint the house. By the middle of May the house will have been power washed and painted with a beautiful color called "Texas Rose." The shutters and trim will also be painted. Concrete will be poured for new sidewalks along the street and up to the front door.

Completion is near!

I hope to see everyone at the Museum for the dedication on Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

David

### Inside this issue:

Election of 1840	2 & 3
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Obituary	
New Point	5-9



### Have you paid your dues to Society?

Memberships are due on January 1st. To date we have several valuable members who have not paid 2006 dues.

Send name, address and phone to:

Historical Society  
P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN  
47240

Individual ... \$10.00

Family ... \$15.00

Contributor ... \$30.00

New members are welcome!

Sign up a friend!

We have been requested by the Yankton County Historical Society in Yankton, South Dakota to notify our members of the availability of tours. This is the final year in the three-year-long Bicentennial commemorating the Lewis & Clark Expedition. There will be two tours this year. For tour information, please call 605-665-3596 or e-mail at [ruptravl@iw.net](mailto:ruptravl@iw.net),

Attn: Annie.

Do you belong to a group; homemaker's, scouts, sorority, church or school group etc. who would like a tour of the Museum after July 4th? If so, please contact Charity Mitchell, phone: 663-5141 or [cmitch00@hsonline.net](mailto:cmitch00@hsonline.net) to arrange a tour!!

The Greensburg-Decatur County Library now offers Ancestry.com Library Edition. You might discover long-lost ancestors of a brand new branch of your family tree. This online database accesses more than 3.5 billion names through information that includes census records, immigration records, Social Security death index, newspaper archives, family trees, and much more.

## Presidential Election of 1840 Decatur County

"The Presidential Election of 1840" in the Greensburg Standard of April 9, 1915 with comments by Calvin D. Davis, Professor Emeritus of History, Duke University.

Recently, Greg Meyer of the Greensburg Library Staff found an article by Logan Esarey in the Standard of April 9, 1915. Greg realized at once, he had found an essay of considerable importance. It described the 1840 election and includes a lively account of campaign activities in Decatur county. The Standard frankly stated that it had copied the article from an Indianapolis newspaper; **but, misspelled Esarey's name!** At the State Library, I learned that the Indianapolis paper was the Star. The Standard had reprinted only part of an installment of a "History of the Press in Indiana" which Esarey had been serializing in the Star.

Logan Esarey at that time was a new member of the Indiana University faculty. Born in a log house in Posey county in 1873, he grew up in a farming

community in which pioneer conditions still prevailed. He taught for several years in elementary schools and became a superintendent of schools. After earning his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees at Indiana, he became an instructor in that university's history department in 1913. In 1915, he published the first volume of his History of Indiana. The serial history of the Indiana press in the Star was a "spin-off" from that history. Three years later, he published the second volume of the History of Indiana.

When I was a graduate student in the Indiana University history department during the mid-1950's, I was much aware of the influence of Logan Esarey upon that department, although he had died in 1942. Our graduate history organization was called the Logan Esarey Club and one of the department's most distinguished professors, R. Carlyle Buley, who had received the Pulitzer Prize for The Old North West: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840, published in 1950, liked to talk about the remarkable writer who had been his mentor. I remember in particular that he told how Esarey refused to wear academic regalia when

walking in commencement processions; but, would wear his lodge's outlandish costume and march with its band all over Bloomington blowing a horn. Esarey, then, was something of an eccentric; but, there was nothing eccentric about his writing. The History of Indiana was first published many years ago, but it retains value as a work of good scholarship and fine writing. And the same can be said regarding The Indiana Home, a collection of essays about pioneer life which Esarey wrote over a long period and which were gathered together and published in 1943, eleven years after his death.

Members of the Decatur County Historical Society who have read Esarey's historical writings have read some of the outstanding works of American history of the early Twentieth Century.

(See page 3 for the actual article from the Greensburg Standard April 9, 1915)



## ELECTION OF 1840 VIVIDLY RECALLED

Decatur County Rally Featured

By the Star Writer

Logan Easery

### “TIPPECANOE AND TYLER TOO”

An interesting story of the campaign of 1840, in which Decatur county is featured prominently, is given in an Indianapolis Sunday paper by Logan Easery. The story brings out the red fire features which characterized political campaigns in the early days of Indiana.

“Every county was instructed to hold a convention, form county and township organizations and provide for county and township celebrations.” Mr. Easery says.

“Among Whig speakers of state fame were Joseph G. Marshall, O. H. Smith, George Dunn, Albert White, William Herod, Caleb Smith, R. W. Thompson, Henry S. Lane, Othniel Clark, Newton Claypool, Samuel C. Sample, Thomas J. Evans, Hugh O'Neill, Schuyler Colfax, John Vawter, Milton Stapp, John Dumont, Stephen C. Stephens, Jeremiah Sullivan, Joseph C. Eggleston, William G. Ewing, James H. Cravens, Jonathan McCarty, John Ewing, George H. Dunn, Samuel Judah, Randall Crawford, Thomas H. Blake, Elisha Huntington, Judge Debruler, Chas. Dewey, and Conrad Baker.

Among the Democrats the best campaigners were Gen. Howard, Edward Hannegan, James Whitcomb, Marinus Willet, Findley Bigger, Amos Lane, Thomas Smith, Robert Dale Owen, John Law, Joseph A. Wright, John G. Davis, Paris C. Dunning, Delaney Eckels, Alvin P. Hovey, Andrew Kennedy, Joben Spencer, Elisha Longg, Nathaniel West, N. B. Palmer, Gen. Drake, John Carr, William W. Wick, James Brown Ray, Joseph Holman, and Ross Smiley.

“A large delegation tramped off to Ohio to attend a celebration at Fort Meigs May 9. By this time Harrison marching clubs were organized in many counties. A rally was called for Decatur county March 22. Almost every voter in the county was present. By 11 o'clock in the morning Greensburg was full of people. Word came that township delegations were approaching. A procession was headed by the Greensburg band, formed and moved down the Michigan road to meet the Adams township delegation. At the head of the latter was a monster canoe drawn by six gray horses. In the canoe were a band and a veteran of '76, frosty headed, but carrying a large banner. The other township delegations were likewise intercepted, after which the long column paraded the town to the court square, where the inevitable speaking began. Descriptions of these meetings appear in all papers and in every issue. At Connersville the lowest estimate of the crowd was 10,000. The canoe was 52 feet long. A log cabin 8x12 was a part of the parade; another float contained a threshing floor with four men using flails. The Hagerstown men attended in their canoe; Rush county sent 1,000 men with a buckeye canoe; Union county sent a troop of dragoons armed and in uniform.

“There was no end to the barbecues, celebrations and mass meetings, no limit to the pranks of the zealous Whigs.”

“The culmination came in the Battle Ground convention of May 29. Indianapolis was a rallying ground for the southeastern part of the state. Delegates and delegations began to arrive May 25. It rained during the three preceding days, but no one complained. The women of the capital had prepared two beautiful banners. After the presentation ceremony the column began to get under way, marching in squadrons of 200 each. Those on horseback took the lead, followed by carriages and wagons with a long rear guard on foot. Many of these latter trudged through the black mud of the Michigan road carrying their shoes in their hands. The column was said to be 25 miles long. Corn cribs, hay stacks, parlors, kitchens, barns, bedrooms, all were thrown open along the way to this army of pilgrims. Everybody was welcome everywhere. Every cabin had its banner up and barrel out.”

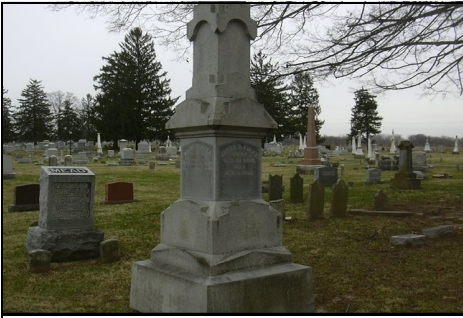
The result of the election of 1840 was that the Whigs carried the day. In Indiana Harrison received 65,362 votes to 51,695 cast for VanBuren. Decatur county gave Harrison 1,298; VanBuren, 759.

In 1836 the vote was Harrison, 950; VanBuren, 513. In the state it was Harrison, 41,281; VanBuren, 32,480.

The Greensburg Standard

April 9, 1915

## Obituary: Gen. James B. Foley



*Foley's Monument at South Park*

**By Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian**

**\* Note, from Greensburg Saturday Review a weekly paper, Dec. 11, 1886, this is second in a series of Obituaries about some of the early settlers and some later well-known men and women who are buried in this county. They are the ones who helped shape Decatur County into what we have today.**

**\*\* James B. Foley is buried in South Park Cemetery in the old section of the cemetery.**

For several months Gen. Foley had been in declining health, and the announcement of his death, which occurred last Sunday morning, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1886, at 5 o'clock, was not unexpected. The funeral was held at the Christian church, conducted by Elder Harkins, assisted by Revs. Dolph and Lathrop of the M.E. Church. The deceased was a man of wide acquaintance, and the large attendance at the funeral services testify of the place he occupied in the hearts of his neighbors and fellow citizens.

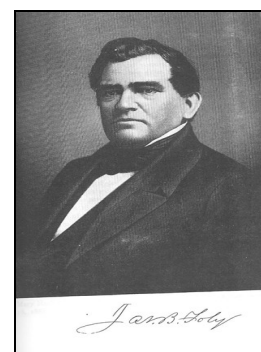
James B. Foley was born in Mason county, Ky., Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1807. His mother, Mary Bradford Foley, was a daughter of Benjamin Bradford, superintendent of the Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, during the Revolutionary War. His father dying when he was but seven years

old left his mother, who had meanwhile become blind, with eight children dependent upon her for support. At the age of 16 he began working on a flat-boat bound for New Orleans. He made but few trips until he commenced freighting, from Maysville and Dover, Ky., down the Mississippi on his own account. He continued in this business for 15 years, during which time he had owned as many boats. At the age of twenty-one he commanded a credit of twenty thousand dollars, a remarkable showing for a man who had just attained his majority, and poor and friendless, had commenced life as a hired hand on a Mississippi flat-boat. It would seem however, that the very obstacles he had to surmount in his efforts to realize a competency, by developing his energy, resources and invention, were the means best adapted to the end, as his subsequent career had proved.

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1834, he removed to Greensburg, and opened a dry-good store, in which business he continued for two years. In 1837 he abandoned merchandising and purchased a farm about two miles from this place. In 1880 he sold his farm, and purchased his late residence about one mile from town. During the entire course of his mercantile and public career, a period of 65 years, he has never been the defendant in a law-suit—an honorable record, justifying a pardonable pride, and one of which few men can boast. In 1841 he was elected treasurer of this county, serving the full term. He was elected in 1850 to the constitutional convention at Indianapolis. In 1852 he was appointed by Governor Wright, Brigadier General of Militia for the 4<sup>th</sup> District. In 1856 he received the Democratic nomination for Congress, and was elected by a majority of near fifteen hundred votes over

his opponent, Will Cumback (a prominent Greensburg citizen), who later was Lt. Governor of Indiana. In 1874 he was again offered the nomination for Congress but declined, since which time he retired from active business. Surrounded by his children and grandchildren, he spent the evening of his days in that peace and content which can come only from a pure heart and clear conscience. He was married April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1829, to Miss Martha Carter, of Mason County, Ky.; six children blessed this union, three of whom are still living (John J. of Greensburg, Alexander A. of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Mrs. Josephine Mansfield of Greensburg). The mother of these children died, and Mr. Foley was again married on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1848, to Mrs. Mary Hackleman of this county, who survives him and by whom he had three children who are still living (William O., of Connersville, Pennsylvania; Mary, wife of Louis Zoller, of Greensburg; and Mrs. Elizabeth Payne, of Franklin, Indiana.

Among the last acts of his life was to give five hundred dollars to the Christian church of Greensburg, and this is not the limit of his liberality; he gave a respectable sum toward the endowment of Bethany College of Virginia, also Butler University of this State.\*



**Picture of  
General  
James B. Foley taken from  
Harding's History of Decatur  
County**

## NEWPOINT IS A BUSINESS MART IN 1913

TOWN ESTABLISHED IN 1840 AND  
KNOWN AS "CRACK AWAY" HAS  
MANY POSSIBILITIES

NEWPOINT, IND- One among the enterprising towns of Decatur county is Newpoint, located about nine miles east of Greensburg on the main line of the Big Four railroad, with a population of about five hundred, and if some of her 'more pretentious' rivals do not look to their laurels, Newpoint will soon lead them in a business way.

It has some splendid business houses, two immense stone quarries, two churches, a magnificent school building, two hotels, attractive homes with well-kept lawns, beautifully and well shaded streets, an abundant supply of natural gas, two rural routes and as hospitable and social people as any town in the state.

### INTERESTING TOWN HISTORY

The first family to locate near the spot upon which the town of Newpoint is now situated was that of Joel Colson,\*\*(1807-1881,a Civil War Vet) who moved from Fairfield, Franklin county, this state, seventy years ago.

The first house erected directly upon the Newpoint plat was erected by Stepp & Cross, who moved a "muley" saw mill from somewhere in Fugit township to Newpoint, where they operated the mill for quite a while.

### "CRACKAWAY"

From 1840 up to 1854 the town was called "Crackaway," when in 1854 the village was platted by Joel Colson \*\* (1807-1881) and George Osborn \*(1820-1892) and the name changed from "Crackaway" to that of Newpoint.

### LEAD MINE

In the year 1840 and up to 1852, a lead mine owned by a tribe of Indians and located four miles southeast of Newpoint, where Decatur, Ripley, and Franklin counties corner and intercept each other was called "The Point," and from this Newpoint derived her name.

In conversation with Leonard Hart, who resides on a farm located near "The Point," the NEWS scribe was informed today that a few years later on an old Indian Chief visited his fame and made inquiries concerning the lead mine one time located at "The Point."

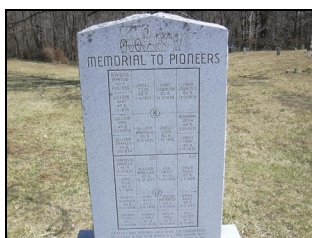
### RAILROAD DEPOT

In the latter part of 1853 the I. & C. railroad company completed laying ties and tracks through Newpoint and began running trains. The I. & C. railroad officials proposed to Joel Colson that if he would build a depot they would appoint him ticket and freight agent at the place. Mr. Colson accepted the proposition, built a two-room frame building with ticket office in one room and placed and operated a general store in the other. A part of the old building now stands on the lot of Abner B. Colson,\*(1839-1923) son of Joel Colson, and is used as a stable.

### CHURCHES

Newpoint has two churches—Christian and Methodist. The Christian church building is a neat, well-built and substantial brick, and the pulpit is filled by Rev. Bryant twice each month.

The Methodist church is a frame building, neat in appearance, well taken care of, but the congregation has no pastor at present time, but arrangements are being perfected, hereby the services of a minister will be secured in the very near future.



Left; Picture of early pioneer marker in Rosburg Cemetery.

Right: Metz General Store which is the Post Office today.

Note: The lead mine was located at the intersection of 950 East and 500 South and looking to the Southwest



## **New Point (continued)**

### **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The Newpoint school building is a beauty, one story and of brick with solid stone foundation; in size it is fifty-seven by seventy-two feet; four large rooms; basement under entire building; large hallway leading through from the south to the north entrance; heated by steam; four acres of lovely play grounds containing beautifully shaded grove in the northwest corner; was erected in 1909, and cost ten thousand five hundred dollars.

### **CORPS OF INSTRUCTORS**

The Newpoint graded schools ran A-one, and are up at the head of the list when it comes to instructors, as no town in the state the size of Newpoint can produce better and few as good.

The High School grades are under the supervision of Prof. Fred C. Baas, college graduate, and one among the most wide-awake and enterprising teachers of the county. He has charge of grades nine, ten and eleven, with pupils to the number of eighteen.

Mrs. Elva D. Baas has supervision over room three, grades six, seven and eight, with and enrollment of thirty.

Mrs. Ida H. Greene \* (1878-1961) has charge of room two, grades three, four and five, with thirty pupils.

Miss Effie M. Parmer has charge of room one, grades one and two and has thirty-six scholars, making a total enrollment of one hundred fourteen.

Agriculture is taught to the boys on each Friday afternoon in grades six, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven, by Prof. Baas, and sewing is taught the girls of grades six, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven by Mrs. Baas at the same hours.

Mrs. Greene teaches agriculture to the little ones in grades two, three, four and five.

Sewing is taught the pupils of grades two, three, four and five by Miss Parmer.

The schools maintain a lecture course of five numbers, which is most liberally and cheerfully supported by pupils, patrons and friends.

The library of the schools consists of two hundred volumes of works on English, History, and some miscellaneous works.

The school spirit is fine and the scholars are among the best to be found anywhere. They are now contemplating buying a piano for the High School.

### **THE FIRST STATE BANK**

The First State Bank of Newpoint, occupies a modern, up-to-date bank building, of stone and brick, with solid cement floor; has fire-proof vault nine by twenty feet that has light, cannot be beaten, and contains a splendid time lock, burglar proof safe. The bank carries burglar and "hold-up" insurance to the amount of ten thousand dollars, which covers safe robbing, safe blowing or the loss by the holding up of the cashier by outlaws.

It is officered as follows: John Hoff, president;\*(1857-1928), John A. Meyer, vice president, and George F. Redelman, cashier. The directors are John W. Koenigkramer,\*\*\* (1864-1934), Charles Risinger, \*(1873-1951), Edward Buckley, T. M. Clark, John H. Metz, Sr., P. P. Schub, John Hoff, John A. Meyer and George F. Redelman.

The individual deposits subject to check and the time certificate deposits total the handsome sum of one hundred thousand dollars, and the bank is an institution that Newpoint and vicinity not only feel proud of but duly appreciate.



## **New Point (continued)**

### **MUSICIANS AND INSTRUCTORS**

Newpoint has two noted musician and instructors, namely Miss Cora M. Starks \*(1878-1945) who teaches piano, and has a class of pupils numbering thirty-five, and her masterly touch of the ivory is equaled by few.

Instructions on the violin are given by Miss Jennie Starks (later Jennie Starks McKee) \*\*\* 1891-1973) and she is an expert teacher, and enjoys the training of a large number of pupils. Newpoint is justly proud of these two young ladies, and readily refers to them with a pardonable pride.

### **STOCK SHIPMENTS AMOUNTING TO \$360,000**

Last year William H. Barnard \* (1861-1937) & Son bought and shipped from his stock aggregating the enormous amount of two hundred and ten thousand dollars, while Fred Wolfe bought and shipped from his stock amounting to the vast sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, making a grand or combined total of live stock shipment from Newpoint for the year of 1912, alone, of three hundred and sixty thousand dollars, which is a showing the little town can boast of and one that is hard to beat.

### **DEPARTMENT STORE**

The business house of Postmaster George W. Metz \* (1861-1920) would do credit to a large city, and should not be classed as an ordinary country general store, but a department store of the up-to-date variety, for in its various departments of his elegant business block will be found a stock of goods that will appeal to all shrewd buyers, for the goods are of the best quality and the assortment exceedingly large. Mr. Metz displays unusual pride and business care in the conduct of his store.

### **BUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN**

Newpoint's business men and women are hustlers, and are as follows:

W. H. Barnard\* (1861-1937 ) & Sons, buyers and shippers of stock

Malcom Henry Loyd \*(1865-1956) conducts a general store

E. F. Starks, \* ( 1863-1937) jeweler and optician

J. J. Puttmann, hardware, implements, coal, and operates a saw mill

John Hoff \* (1857-1928 ) general merchandise

Frank Hooten,\* ( 1874 - ? ) confectionery and ice cream

George T. Cornelius, blacksmith and repair shop

Fred Wolfe,\* (1860-1935 ) meat market and stock buyer

J. T. Cornelius & Son, general store

Henry Ennebrock, \* (1858-1916) shoe repair shop

Harvey Griffin, \* (1875-1959) in charge of Ed Day saw mill

Freeland & Wilson, timber dealers

Jerman & King, feed mill

Dr. L. W. D. Jerman, \* (1837-1915) physician and surgeon

Chalmer Ross, \* (1885-1950) tonsorial artist

Henry Wolf,\* (1855-1935) barber and shoe shop

W. H. Stark,\* (1857-1938) plumber and gas fitter

Benjamin Kneven, harness and repair shop

James H. Meyer, tonsorial artist

**New Point (continued)**

Dr. Harley S. McKee,\* (1878-1919) physician and surgeon  
Peter P. Schub, drink imporium  
Herman H. Green, \* (1847-1920) hotel and livery  
Fred Wolfe \* (1860-1935) buyer and shipper of stock  
Ephram Dean,\*\* (1853-1928) general blacksmithing  
William King, \* (1857-1950) saw mill and lumber  
Robert F. Carr, \* (1869-1956) lumber dealer  
Adam E. Huber,\* (1871-1937) fancy poultry  
James Blair, \*(1860-1937) carpenter  
Wm. Clyde Parmer, \* (1882-1962) saw mill  
Peter C. Grow, contractor and builder-(died in Missouri after 1938,past age 90)  
William Melloh, manufactures pick, spike and mall handles for  
The Big Four railroad in large quantities  
Mrs. Mellie Freeland, \* (1869-1933) dress maker  
Mrs. Theresia Ennebrock, \* (1861-1927) millinery  
Mrs. Elizabeth Kuert, \* (1843-1928) hotel  
Mrs. Mollie Starks, dress maker

**NEWPOINT NATURAL GAS CO.**

Randolph Starks, president;\*(1838-1916) John Hoff, secretary,\* (1857-1928) and L.W.D. Jerman, treasurer,\* (1837-1915) supplies the town with a bountiful amount of natural gas.

**NEWPOINT'S BIG ENTERPRISE**

is the Big Four Stone Company, with John J. Puttmann president and Joseph J. Kappes secretary. They operate two quarries—number one contains twenty-seven acres and number two, eighty acres, making a total of one hundred and seven acres of stone quarries operated by these men, the largest in the country.

The stone produced from these quarries is of the Niagara hard limestone quality, and is a superior stone for building purposes, etc.

They employ sixty men with an average pay roll of from four hundred and fifty to five hundred dollars per week.

The company owns a powerful locomotive and five flat cars used for hauling stone from the quarries to the Big Four main line tracks, and one office car, and three miles of track for switching purposes.

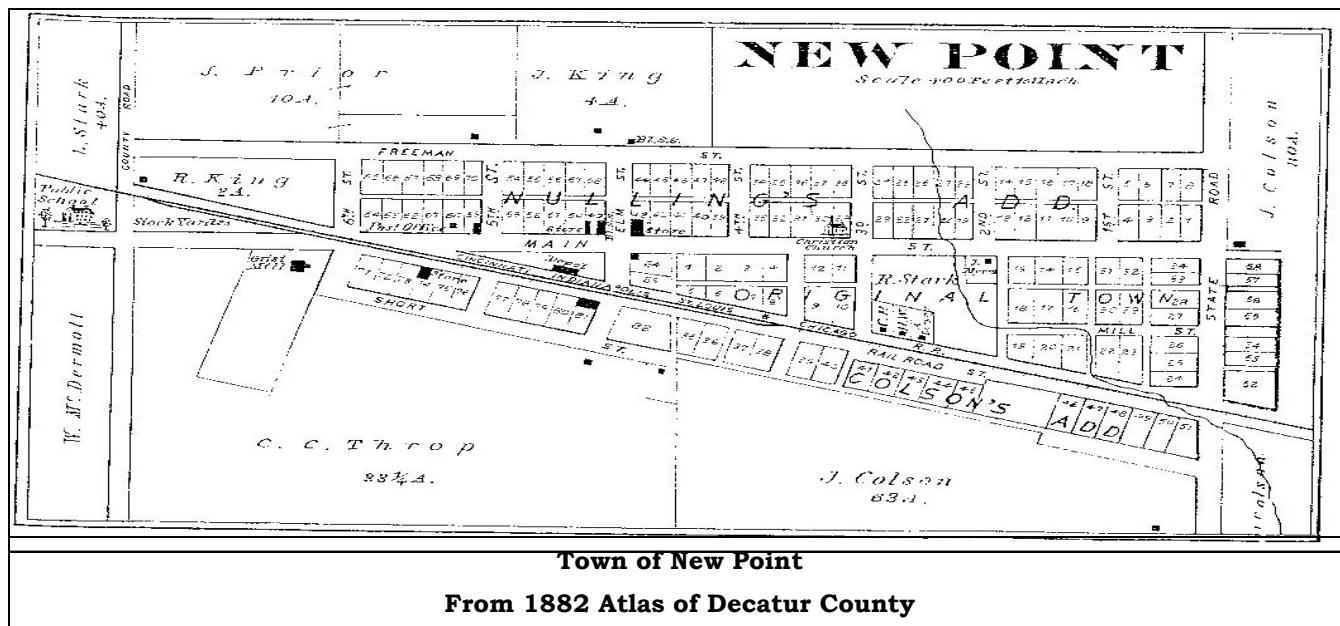
In the quarries they have two number three Gate's stone crushers with a capacity per day of two hundred yards crushed stone; one Sullivan channeling machine; ten steam drills in good working order; ten monster derricks; four steam derrick hoists for handling, loading and moving stone; three steam boilers rated at thirty, forty and sixty horse power, and all other necessary equipments for a completer operation of the quarry business.

Josiah S. Doaks began work at the quarries the first day they were operated and has worked there ever since and is still working at the advanced age of eighty-two years.

**\*buried in New Rossburg Cemt, \*\*-buried in old Rossburg cemt, both located in Saltcreek twp near Rossburg , \*\*\* buried South Park Cemt.- in Greensburg**

**First printed in the Sept 19, 1913 Greensburg Standard, edited and added to by  
Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian  
March, 14,2006**

**This is a second in a series of articles on the small towns in Decatur County, next issue will be Millhousen in Marion Twp.**



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*"The Indiana Home"*

A book review by George Granholt

The article on Logan Esarey, submitted by Professor Calvin Davis, sent me to my bookshelf. There it was: my copy of ***The Indiana Home!*** I opened the small brown book and reread the inscription: "To George from Dad, Dec. 25, 1943." I am certain I cannot find any other Christmas gift from 43 years ago. Of course I began to scan the six sections of the little volume which records the early history of Indiana: "The First Inhabitants," "A Cabin in the Clearing," "The Indiana Home," "Farm Life in the Fifties," "The Settler Becomes a Citizen," and "A Tale or Two."

The book, written in an anecdotal style, utilizes the jargon and diction of the pioneer family in Indiana during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The story-telling is presented from both the first and third points of view, and the vocabulary is well-suited to the reading comprehension of young people from the age of twelve on up.

I'm certain I did not examine "The Indiana Home" from a critical standpoint when I was twelve years old; I did read it because it offered vicarious adventure along with insight into the hardships and steadfastness of the pioneer life. The book describes the flora and fauna of the Indiana

territory before the advance of "civilization" destroyed much of it. The particular role of the men and of the women who fashioned a life out of the wilderness stands in contrast to the modern view of a 21<sup>st</sup> century family's lifestyle. There are numerous accounts of the need for neighborly cooperation in not only hacking a living out of the land, but also in making that living sustainable. There are accounts of the religious fervor evident in the settler's lives: the itinerant preacher, the camp meetings, and the communal effort needed to raise the small log church. Truly, Esarey's book emphasizes not only the importance of strong family life, but its absolute necessity for survival. Because the book is not always "politically correct"--as witness the first section on the Native Americans in Indiana--it helps us realize how both our social attitudes as well as our material circumstances have changed over the last 150 years.

*The Indiana Home* is still in print and available from the IU Bookstore and other outlets. The newest addition, published in 1992, contains 52 illustrations. Unfortunately, my little book has none. Gosh...I'll bet my Dad would buy me a new one!



# Historical Society of Decatur County

## The Bulletin

Vol. 11 No. 3

Fall 2006

Greensburg, Indiana

### Epigraph

*In foreign relations, as in all other relations, a policy has been formed only when commitments and power have been brought into balance."*

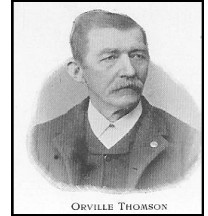
*-Walter Lippman 1943*

**Historical Society  
Museum Dedication  
Sunday, September 10th  
2:00 p.m.  
Open house until 5:00 p.m.  
See you there !**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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## ORVILLE THOMSON 1823 ~ 1910



Orville Thomson, veteran newspaper man, soldier and citizen died at his home at 312 East Central Avenue at six o'clock Wednesday morning, Sept 23, 1910. He was a man of remarkable vigor until stricken of paralysis on December 9 last, while walking home from his customary daily trip down on the square. Since then he had not been out of the house but was able to sit up a part of the time up to the day before his death. His death was due to general debility.

The deceased was a son of John and Spicy Hamilton Thomson who came to this county from Nicholas county, Kentucky, in the spring of 1823 and settled on a farm four miles northeast of this city near the home of R. A. Hamilton where Orville was born on June 20, 1823.

When a boy from seven to twelve years he attended the county schools in the winter and in the summer worked in his father's wool-carding factory. In 1834 the family moved to Greensburg and young Orville, his brother Origen and sister, Camilla, were enrolled in the Decatur Country Seminary (\*\*located on SW corner of Franklin and McKee street) when it was opened by Prof. James G. May that fall.

In December 1835, when his father founded what is now *The Greensburg Standard* he began to learn the printer's trade, and he continued as printer, editor or publisher for practically all his life.

In 1843 he and Jacob W. Mills bought the *Greensburg Chronicle* from Judge Thomson and had charge of the same until 1851. He was still connected with the paper in some capacity most of the time until 1858 when he and his brother Origen, founded the *Lawrenceburg Press*. He lived there about two years. In 1860 he was employed on the *Indianapolis Journal* and during the war wrote articles from the field for that paper. After the war he was employed on *The Standard* for several years and in about 1880 established a job printing office which he conducted for about twenty years.

In 1882 he wrote much of the historical matter that appeared in the Decatur County Atlas and in 1897 and 1898 wrote a series of articles for *The Standard* that reviewed all the early history of the county. Practically all of the history of the county has been written by him. He had a vivid recollection and his writings were remarkably authentic and have attracted wide attention.

Mr. Thomson united with the Christian church in 1855 under the ministry of Rev. Joseph Lucas.

On the first call for troops in April 1861 he enlisted in Co. F. Seventh Indiana and in September reenlisted for three years in Co. G. of the same regiment and was elected First Sergeant. He was promoted to First Lieutenant and transferred to Veteran Relief Corps September 9, 1863, on account of disability received in the service and resigned April 9, 1864. He was a man of pronounced views on the question of the perpetuity of the nation and whether by sword or pen he exerted himself to the utmost to preserve the Union. In politics he adhered firmly to the principles of the Republican party and was prominent in the council of the party for many years.

*(Continued on page 2)*



Orville Thomson Obituary (continued from page one)

In his later years Thomson reflected much upon the “good old days” and was considered an infallible authority on all points touching the early history of the county. He was the oldest native of the county at the time of his death. He knew the history of the county because he had been a part of it. Hence his words were readily accepted as true.

The last work he did was to write the history of his old regiment and it may be considered the crowning work of his life. He took great pride in the “Old Seventh”, and he labored long and hard to get its history in shape so it could be handed down to future generations. It was a hard task, and he met with many discouragements. When finally finished, the book received the unstinted praise of his comrades and the edition was soon disposed of. It is a creditable volumn of 250 pages and may be found in the library of every Seventh regiment man and many comrades of other regiments and citizens have it. He not only wrote this book, but he set the type for it without glasses after he had reached the age of eighty-two years.

In 1895 he published a book entitled “Crossing the Plains,” telling of the experiences of a colony of Decatur county people who emigrated to Oregon in 1851. So, from 1835 to 1903 a period of sixty-eight years Mr. Thomson was actively engaged as editor and publisher, a record never attained by any one in this locality and equaled by few in the state. He was a useful man and a good citizen.

In his career as editor and publisher he was associated with his brother in laws, Davies Batterton and John J. Hazelrigg, (see next Obit) for many years. These men formed a trio of editorial writers that were hard to beat and were a potent influence in moulding the opinions of the voters of Decatur county for half century.

Mr. Thomson was married May 15, 1845, to Nancy J. Hazelrigg who died February 15, 1899. Eight children were born to them. Greeley and Camilla died in childhood, and a daughter Mrs. Alice Wade died at Wabash in 1884. Two sons; John P. and Charles H. and three daughters; Misses Mary and Lizzie, and Mrs. L. D. Braden survive. Also two sisters; Mrs. Camilla Donnell, of The Dalles, Oregon, and Miss Rosina Thomson and a half-brother, Jesse M. Thomson, of Cincinnati.

The funeral was held at the home yesterday afternoon at two o'clock, Rev. W. G. Johnston officiating, assisted by Rev. James B. Lathrop, the latter being a life-long fried of the deceased. The burial was in charge of “Pap” Thomas Post No. 5, G.A.R. of which the deceased was an honored member.

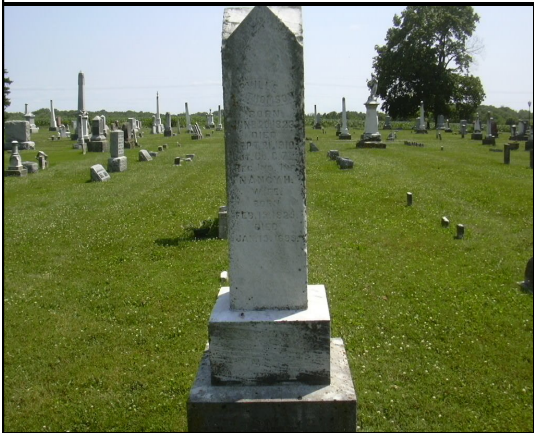
nb- from the Greensburg Standard, Sept. 25, 1910: this is the third in a series of obits about some of the early settlers and some later well-known men and women who lived and died and are buried in Decatur County. They are the ones who help shape Decatur County into what we have today \*\* Orville Thomson is buried in South Park in the Old Section, not far from the Soldiers Circle along the left side the road going west.

***\*\* I take great pleasure is announcing, that our new archive room in the addition at the Historical Society Museum will now be called the Orville Thomson Room, named after the really First Historian this county had. Without him we would not have the history of the early settlers and the beginnings of the county and this city, and for this we thank him and now we honor him.***

***Thanks Orville.***

Edited by, Russell Wilhoit

Decatur County Historian - July 2006

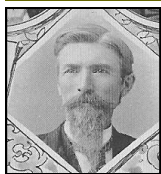


Left: Thomson's tombstone at South Park Cemetery



Right: Hazelrigg's tombstone at South Park Cemetery





## J.J. Hazelrigg 1839-1909

John J. Hazelrigg passed into the great beyond, at his home on North Broadway, at seven o'clock Thursday evening, after a long illness of a complication of diseases. He had been in delicate health for several years, but had been able to be on the street at intervals until about ten weeks ago. He knew his time had come and talked freely to his wife and son about his going away as if it were to some fair and happy clime. The end came peacefully as he sank away into a quiet sleep that shall know no waking until he shall open his eyes in that bright, eternal land of bliss, where many of his dear friends have gone on before. He had remarked that there were more on the other side than on this.

With the passing of Mr. Hazelrigg, one of the leading men in Greensburg has gone to his long home. Beginning his business career at the early age of seventeen, he had been intimately associated with the commercial, educational, and moral development of our people for an even sixty years.

He had seen Greensburg develop from a struggling village of some 500 people to a splendid city of 7,000 souls. During all this time John J. Hazelrigg bore a conspicuous part to the progress of our city. He was therefore proud of his home city, which he had helped to make.

John Jay Hazelrigg was the youngest child of John and Jane Hilles Hazelrigg, who emigrated from Bourbon County, Kentucky, in 1832, and settled on the old Hazelrigg homestead, one mile southwest of this city where their son, John, was born October 24, 1839.

In 1849, at the early age of ten years, young Hazelrigg entered *The Standard* office (then the *Decatur Press*) and began to learn the printer's trade under the tutorage of his brother-in-law, Orville Thomson, who is still living in this city, and the late Jacob W. Mills. Seven years later, in the fall of 1856, he and another brother-in-law, Davies Batterton, bought the Press and changed its name to the *Decatur Republican* to conform more closely to the same of the new political party it espoused. Mr. Hazelrigg continued as part owner of the *Republican* until January 1, 1863, when he became postmaster of Greensburg, under appointment of President Lincoln, and served for four years. In May, 1868, he again purchased *The Republican* and held it until October, 1872. On January 1, 1878, he again bought the paper and changed its name to *The Greensburg Standard*, and continued to publish it with the assistance of his two sons, Frank C. and Dix D., until October 1, 1894, when it was sold.

So, Mr. Hazelrigg was either owner or part owner of *The Standard* for a period of over thirty-seven years, and was connected with its publication in various ways for more than forty-seven years. But few men can claim so long service as editor and publisher. He was thoroughly indoctrinated in the principles of the Republican party from its incipency, by his associations with such strong characters as Jacob Mills, Davies Batterton, and Orville Thomson, and became an able writer and defender of the principles of national sovereignty and the preservation of the Union during the dark period of the Civil War, when men's souls were tried. A perusal of the files of the

paper in the 60's shows that Mr. Hazelrigg was a forceful wielder of the pen and a worthy successor to those who had preceded him. He stood four-square on all public and moral questions. As a temperance advocate he was very pronounced. He got up from his bed at the recent county option election to vote dry, remarking that he had waited a long time for that opportunity.

Besides his long newspaper experience Mr. Hazelrigg was engaged in numerous other enterprises. He was associated with his brother, the late William H. Hazelrigg, in the drug business, and was interested in the carriage manufacturing business for a time. He served an enlistment in the 76<sup>th</sup> Indiana regiment in July and August, 1862, and was the regimental postmaster. A few years ago he built the Hazelrigg theater, which was destroyed by fire soon after.

In 1862, under the ministry of the late D. R. VanBuskirk, Mr. Hazelrigg confessed and obeyed Christ and became a member of the Christian church, when it met in the old church on the railroad, and was thereafter an earnest and efficient worker in the church and Sunday school. When the new church was built at its present location in 1869, he contributed \$1,000 which he estimated at the time to be one third what he was worth. This incident shows his liberality in no uncertain way. For many years he was an elder in the church and always took a great interest in the church.

Mr. Hazelrigg was married in 1860 to Zella M. Rhiver, who died in 1869. Four children were born to them, two dying in infancy and two sons, Frank C. and Dix D., growing to manhood. The latter died in Missouri in 1899, and the former still survives. He was again married in 1872 to Nean M. Metcalf, who together with his son, Frank, are left to mourn. One brother, William H. Hazelrigg, died at Adams in 1888, and three sisters have preceded him in death—Ms. Nancy Thomson in 1898, Mrs. Margaret Batterton in 1905, and Mrs. Mary O'Hair in 1908. One sister, Mrs. Lizzie Conner, of Noblesville, survives.

Funeral services were held at the home at 2:30 Saturday afternoon, Rev. W. G. Johnston officiating, assisted by Rev. James B. Lathrop. The latter had known the deceased since his boyhood, and spoke in highest terms of his integrity as a businessman and commended his example as a Christian citizen as worthy of emulation. The following nephews acted as pall bearers: John H. Batterton, Dan and Max Hazelrigg, J. P. and C. H. Thomson, of this city, and Harvey Stout, of Indianapolis. The burial was in the family lot in South Park Cemetery.

nb— taken from *Greensburg Standard*, a weekly newspaper, April 2, 1909, this is the fourth in a series of obits about some of the early settlers and founders of this county, who helped shape the city and county into what we have today.

\*\* John J Hazelrigg is buried in South Park Cemetery, just a about a row from Orville Thomson, who was his friend and partner for many years in newspaper business, so they now lie in peace close to each other for eternity.

Edited by Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian- July 2006

## THE PRESIDENTS REPORT

By David Miers

It's with great pleasure to share with you that we are 99.9 % complete with the addition and restoration of the museum. It seems it was just last week that I was writing this report to inform you, the membership, that construction was going to begin and that all my reports in the future would be about the progress of the project. Here we are 11 months later and only a few things left on the "punch list" to finish.

When you enter the museum you will be astonished at the changes and improvements that have been made to the old house returning it to its glory of many years ago. The most notable change is the front porch, we have had Weberdings of Batesville make an exact replica of how the porch looked from a photograph of the house from the early 1900's. Also, a continual problem we have had in the past has been the maintenance of the deck. That has now been rectified with brick sub structure and a porch deck made from brick pavers. It has made the front entrance to the museum very attractive and inviting. Almost all the floors in the house have either been refinished or repainted, and several of the walls have been papered or repainted.

A big job has been to move and organize all our archival items into the new building and put all the furniture back in its place in the old house. We have had many volunteers and Board members very active in this process and all their help has been greatly appreciated. I'm not going to name everyone for fear of missing someone. But a big **THANK YOU** to everyone who has helped in this monumental process.

The Board has set the 10<sup>th</sup> of September for the dedication of the new museum. The dedication will begin at 2:00 pm at the museum and the museum will be open until 5:00 pm that day for your viewing pleasure. We hope to see you there.

**DAVID**

### Historical Society of Decatur County

#### Program and Presentation

#### "The Underground Railroad in Decatur County"

Presentation of the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Luther Donnell by Mary Elizabeth Donnell Mitchell to the Decatur County Historical Society Museum on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October at 2 p.m. After the presentation there will be a talk on the Underground Railroad in Decatur County by Bill Smith in the Gallery of the Museum. Luther Donnell, a farmer living in Fugit Township was an abolitionist and helped Blacks escaping from the slave states to reach freedom in Canada. In 1847 while helping a slave woman, Caroline, and her four children escape he was caught and arrested. His trial in 1849 was held in the old courthouse on the site of the present one. He was convicted and fined \$1,500. Later in 1852 the Indiana Supreme Court reversed the decision. At the moment the Underground Railroad Initiative is considering a request for a marker at the Decatur County Courthouse about the case and one at Kingston in honor of Caroline. Please join us at the Museum on October 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or RENEWAL**— Payable annually by January 1st—P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240

Individual ... \$10.00 Family ... \$15.00 Contributor ... \$30.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State, ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Museum Musings

by Diana Springmier, Director

With most of the boxing and unboxing and returning the Museum back to quasi-normal behind them, the staff and volunteers are preparing to open for you and the community on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. This will initiate returning to the regular Saturday/Sunday 1:00 to 4:00 hours. In addition, the museum will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The obituary files which have formerly been housed at the Greensburg Daily News office are now available to the public in the meeting room of the museum's addition on the first floor. If one needs to access these files at other times than the museum's open hours, call Russell Wilhoit at 812-552-5595, Charity Mitchell at 663-5141, or Susan Ricke at 663-8365.

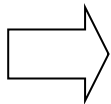
Helen Hamilton will meet with the museum's volunteers on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, to familiarize them with the functions served by the addition. If you know of a friend who would be interested in volunteering a couple of hours every few months, call Helen at 663-8323.

The following volunteers have given more hours than one could tally the past year emptying rooms of furniture and packed boxes so floors could be refinished and carpeting laid, then unpacking boxes and moving all back to its original area. Also all of the museum's textiles have been indexed, photographed for the computer and packed in acid free paper. Others have sewn curtains, filed archives, and built shelves. Those who have been involved daily are Charity Mitchell, Russell Wilhoit, Susan Ricke, Judy Muckerheide and Nita McCoy. Also willing to help when needed were Reed Schuster, Lauren Wenning, Katie Beard, Ginny Garvey, Linda Volk, Polly Matlock, Dennis and Susan Wilson, Greg Meyers, Lois Carol McCormack, Tom Ricke, Luke Ricke, Helen Hamilton, Bob and Rita Simmonds, Janet Power, Jane Brown, Libby Springmier, Tyler Springmier. A very special thanks to Brett McCoy for donating a computer for the archive room and performing maintenance on our main computer.

David Miers as President of the Board of Directors of the Historical Society of Decatur County has been heading the building committee, serving as liaison between the architect and the builders, and dealing with the unexpected day-to-day questions to be addressed with the project as with all building projects of this scope. We thank you all for sharing your busy schedules with this major society undertaking.

The office is already booking meetings, art exhibits, scout troops etc. for fall 2006 and early 2007. Call the museum, 663-2764 or me at 663-2997 for scheduling your group visits.

Diana



Helen Hamilton will meet with the museum's volunteers on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, to familiarize them with the functions served by the addition. If you know of a friend who would be interested in volunteering a couple of hours every few months, call Helen at 663-8323.

### Trip Around Decatur County

*Jane Brown has graciously agreed to give another tour of Decatur County for all those who missed the tour in April. In order to know how many and who would like another trip, please call Charity Mitchell (663-5141) with this information. Thank*

Many thanks to the following businesses for selling cards, ornaments, videos, and DVD's from the Historical Society:

Chamber of Commerce, Greensburg Camera & Photography, and Unique Gifts.

The Greensburg 1937 (VHS and DVD) and Greensburg 1959 films (VHS and DVD) are available at the Chamber of Commerce, Greensburg Camera, and Unique Gifts.

Please patronize these businesses when you can.

***Don't forget to check your address label for your membership expiration date. If you have not paid your dues, this could be your last copy of "The Bulletin".***



## Millhausen is Quaint, unique

Most Picturesque Little Town

In the Country is Known as

### German Settlement

Church, Schools, Business Houses  
And Early History of Unusual Interest



The white cross in the foreground indicates the location of the original church.

Millhausen, Ind., - The most picturesque town in Decatur County is Millhausen, situated on Squaw Run, in the southeast part of Marion township, and has a population of about four hundred.

The town does a good business, being the center of a large German population which extends into the adjoining counties.

The citizens of this little town are, almost to a family, Germans, and in all their private relations of life they are honest, hospitable to all. They bid welcome to their habitations and are always glad to make you their guest.

#### Brief Historical Notes.

The following brief mention of the town as it was in years gone by will doubtless be of interest:

The first man\* to settle on the present site of Millhausen was Maximilian Schneider (1799-1870) in the year 1839, and he entered a section of land that year, a part of which Millhausen is located on. He built the first house on the town site the same year, and it was a large brick, two story "L" shaped, and the house still stands and is occupied by Joseph Herbert. (it is still standing, recently remodeled-2005)



Schneider Home still stands and was remodeled in 2005

#### Why the Streets Run in Every Direction

One year later—in 1840—Mr. Schneider laid off the town, and to the great surprise and disgust of the latter day residents, he laid it off in directions to suit the location of his then most elegant "L" shaped residence, and that fully explains to the people of today how and why Millhausen's streets run in zig zag directions and "forty ways from Sunday." It is a notorious fact that not one street in the town runs for one hundred yards in the same direction—let the pedestrian or the driver of a rig start in an eastern direction on one of the streets and in less than it takes to tell it he will be headed and going due north. Millhausen certainly has the worst "momixed" up streets of any town in the world.

The first store kept in Millhausen was by Maximilian Schneider in 1841, and he was also the first postmaster of the town.

The grist mill with its three burrs for grinding wheat and corn was opened and operated by Barney Hardebeck in 1852, and in 1853 he added a saw mill equipped with the old time "up and down" saw, and both mills were run by steam. These mills were located on the ground where the Whitkemper hotel now stands, and were in constant operation until 1873, when, in the language of one of Millhausen's citizens, "the panic knocked them hell west and crooked."

Mr. Hardebeck built and also tried his hand at running a woolen factory in 1865, and with this enterprise he did well until 1873, when the panic\* (\*Panic of 1873-Bank failures) knocked the financial props from under this enterprise along with his milling proposition. He was forced to dispose of his factory, selling it to Bernard Zapfe (1836-1906), Bernard Brinkman (1810-1879?) and Adam Stahl, who operated it only a few months when it was consumed by fire. The same year they built in its stead a new factory building of brick, continued the business for a time, sold the machinery to foreign parties,

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## The Bulletin

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retired the business and sold the buildings to Casper Vocke (1825-1913) who installed therein a stove factory and operated it for two years at the end of which time both the business and building were abandoned. The building finally toppled over, never to be rebuilt.

Herbert & Rhors established a tannery here in 1870, and Mr. Rhors died in 1908, but the business is still continued by Mr. Herbert.

In 1865, Mrs. E. Moorman erected a grist mill here, and her sons, Joseph and Frank, operated the same for a period of ten years when the mill was abandoned and the building leased to George Bessler, who came here from Cincinnati in 1875 and fitted up a furniture factory in the same, running it for a period of five years, employing some half dozen men, and did well, but on account of lack of railroad or shipping facilities could not compete with railroad towns and quit.

In 1890 Herbert & Rohrs erected a large and well equipped flouring mill, and the same is being operated today by Harry Herbert, (1880-1914) who does custom grinding and saw mill work.

A planing mill was established here in 1852 by Christian Ruhl (1807-1892) who did a flourishing business for a while.

Francis Verkamp (1815-1891) owned and operated a sash and door factory in 1856, and had remarkable success. He continued in business for several years and when he died in 1891, His factory doors were closed never to be reopened.



Catholic Church in 2006

### Catholic Church

The first Catholic church in Decatur County was organized at Millhousen, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1840, a rude log church building, with a rough exterior, chinked and daubed, twenty by forty feet, was erected under the auspices of the Rev. Father Joseph Ferneding, a missionary priest.

As time passed on the increase of the Catholics of Millhousen was surprising, wherefore they determined to build instead of the wooden chapel a good sized brick church, thirty-eight by forty feet. This was built in 1850, still stands and has been converted into a splendid school building which stands on a lot adjoining the church on the east.

In 1865 the erection of a new, modern and one of the finest and largest churches in the county was begun, and after four years labor it was completed in 1869, and stands today as a monument to the devotedness and liberality of the Catholics (both living and dead) of Millhousen and vicinity, and speaks more eloquently than marble and granite.

This handsome church structure is a brick, stone foundation, one hundred forty feet in length, fifty-five feet wide and forty-six feet high; has a large clock in the cupola as well as four bells of the chime order, and the sweet and chanting chimes of these four great bells may be heard echoing and re-echoing amid the far distant hills and valleys every Sunday morning throughout the years.

Recently three new altars were placed in the church at a cost of two thousand dollars.

The church interior is beautifully and artistically frescoed, contains a pipe organ placed therein at a cost of two thousand dollars, is heated by natural gas, but as the News scribe is writing this item the work of installing a new heating system—that of hot air—is in progress, and will be completed by November first. This church property is worth between fifty and sixty thousand dollars, to say nothing of its furnishings which run up into the thousands.

The Rev. J. Adam Urich is the present pastor (1913) and has been for near ten years. He was born in Vanderburg County, this State, February 16, 1863, being fifty years of age. He attended common school until fourteen years of age when he entered St. Meinrad College in Spencer County, Ind., and here he devoted himself to hard studies for a period of nine years, and at the age of twenty-three was ordained priest by the Right Rev. Bishop Francis Silas Chatard, of the Indianapolis Diocese. His first appointment was at St. Ann, Jennings county, where he remained in charge of the church for eighteen years, and in 1894 was transferred to Millhousen.

Rev. Father Urich is a polished scholar, earnest in his endeavors to persuade his people to live an honorable, upright Christian life, and his whole heart is earnestly devoted to his chosen life's work. He is a pleasant and most agreeable gentleman, and we richly enjoyed the time spent in his

### Magnificent Home

which is called the parsonage, or Priest House. It was erected in 1856, is a two story brick, eight rooms, and was at one time the finest parsonage in all southern Indiana. The household furnishings are of the very finest and best, and is truly an ideal home.

The church has a membership numbering 750 (in 1913). Sermon and High Mass at 10 o'clock a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Also Communion Mass Sundays and Holy Days. Catechism instructions for children

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from six to sixteen years of age every Sunday afternoon at two o'clock. Sister Leonisse presided at the organ and there is a splendid choir of male and female voices.

#### Millhousen Schools

The first school house build by the Catholics in Decatur County was at Millhousen in 1854 by Messrs. Hardebeck, Strawback and Rhul, being a private enterprise, and the first school was taught by Leon Lehman, during the year 1854.

In the year 1880 a new school house was erected by donatons from emembers of the Catholic church and furnished by the township trustee. It stands just across the street and opposite the church on the north. It is a one story brick, 56x36 feet, and in addition to its two school rooms contains apartment for the homes of the teachers. It cost \$4,000.

Just east of the church and on an adjoining lot stand the old church building, which has been converted into a school house consisting of two rooms.

Sister Leonisse is principal of the schools and has charge of grades five, six, seven, and eight. She teaches agriculture, domestic science and industrial work to pupils of grades seven and eight, in addition to the other studies, and also teaches music and German in all grades and departments. Sister Leonisse is one of the oldest and most successful teachers in the county, having taught for thirty-three years, and the work done in the Millhousen schools is thorough. She takes great pride and interest in the prosperity of the schools and their excellence is largely due to her efforts. In her department are forty-two students.

In the new building in room one are grades one and two—primary department—and in room two, grades three and four.

Sister Hilda has charge of room one, grades one and two, primary department, with fifty pupils, while Sister Manetta instructs the scholars of room two, grades three and four, and has an enrollment of forty-nine—making total enrollment of schools of 141 pupils.

#### Business Men

Millhousen has some wide-awake and enterprising business men today. Among them we mention George (died 1931), John (died-1946 and Louis Scheidler (died 1937?), who conduct a general wood work shop, painting and trimming of buggies, carriages, etc., blacksmithing, machine repair work, etc., and John is said to be one of the finest and best mechanics in the county.

Ed Henger conducts a livery bard; Dr. Nicholas C. Baumann is a practicing physician and surgeon; Ed Henger is the village blacksmith; Dr. J. Cressie Glass is the dispenser of drugs, practicing physician, postmaster, dealer in agricultural implements, etc.; Mrs. Minnie Moor-man conducts a general store; Joseph Pfeifer (1847-1934) is an undertaker as well as a first class tonsorial artist; Harry Herbert (1880-1914) runs the flouring and saw mill. Ben Herbert (1880-1917) is in charge of a harness shop; Mrs. Mollie Herbert manages a lunch counter; Barney Zapfe conducts a first class general store and John Whitkemper and Will Link deal in "wet" goods.

\*there is some question whether Maximilian Schneider was the first settler and founder of Millhousen, he never bought any land till 1838, and there were others who had bought land in 1836 and 1837, he could have been there by then but record says differently, we might never know for sure. **This is the** same for the date on the sign (on right when you enter town), it says founded in 1834, but again earliest land deeds only date to 1836.

Authors note, I could not find the burial spot for Maximilian Schneider. I do believe he is buried in the church cemetery in Millhousen, if anyone knows for sure, please contact the author.

\*\* First printed on Oct.10,1913 in the Greensburg Standard, edited and added to by

Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian:

July 16, 2006

This was third in a series of articles about the small towns in Decatur County around the turn of the last century. In the next issue, we will travel to Adams in Adams Twp.



## A Commentary on the Careers of two Decatur County Newspapermen,

### Orville Thomson and John J. Hazelrigg, and Orville Thomson's Legacy as a Historian

By

Calvin D. Davis

Professor Emeritus of History

Duke University

Originally published in *The Greensburg Standard*, these obituaries are brief biographies of two men who made that newspaper one of the great Indiana weekly newspapers of the nineteenth century. Orville Thomson, moreover, wrote more of the county's history than any other person during his life time.

In 1835 Orville Thomson's father, John, announced that he would publish a newspaper to be called the *The Greensburg Repository*. It would be, he said, "a family newspaper, independent, but not neutral." He may have been trying to assure prospective readers that it would not be excessively partisan. Some people may have had doubts when they read the first issue in December, for on its masthead was a statement, "The Union, the Constitution and the Enforcement of the Laws." These words sound like patriotic platitudes today, but when John Thomson wrote them, readers would have understood that he firmly opposed the idea of John C. Calhoun, recently vice-president of the United States and currently a South Carolina senator, that states had the right to nullify Federal laws. *The Repository* made clear Thomson's support for the Whig Party which called for the nomination by the Whigs of General William Henry Harrison, Indiana's first territorial governor and a former Ohio senator, for the Presidency. Thomson's newspaper would be a Whig newspaper until the party fell apart after the Kansas-Nebraska bill became law on May 30, 1854. Thereupon it became a Republican paper and remained so throughout its history. It consistently advocated temperance and always gave approval to Christian piety; it maintained these attitudes despite frequent changes of its name and ownership. In 1868 on one of the several occasions when he was buying the paper, John J. Hazelrigg renamed it *The Greensburg Standard*, and that would be its name until its owners stopped publication in 1925.

Several months before publication of *The Repository* began, Thomson's son, Orville, became the first pupil to enroll in the Decatur County Seminary. The county had welcomed the state government's plan for a system of secondary schools which would charge moderate fees and had built for its seminary an almost square brick building with a cupola on the southwest corner of the intersection of South Franklin and McKee streets. (The building still stands, a private residence, sometimes of two families. It no longer has a cupola.) James G. May, the seminary's first teacher and superintendent, never forgot "a bright little boy of full habits, apparently about eleven years of age, and for that age well grown" who appeared on the first day of school in January 1835. The boy told May his name was Orv Thomson. "Don't spell Thomson with a p," he warned. Orv brought books he had studied in other schools and May learned that he knew what was in them. Orv made rapid progress; when John Thomson began publishing *The Repository* in December Orv was able to help. He learned to set type and to operate the press. As he grew up he became proficient with these tasks and began writing articles for the paper.

In 1843, when Orville was twenty years old, John Thomson sold the paper, now called *The Chronicle*, to him and Jacob W. Mills. The partners continued John Thomson's work without difficulty. Orville on May 14, 1845, married Nancy Hazelrigg, a daughter of John J. Hazelrigg, Sr. who was, like Orville's father, a prosperous settler from Kentucky. Apparently Nancy's mother had died some time before, for her name does not appear in records the present writer has seen. When the elder Hazelrigg died on October 3, 1846, Orville became administrator of his estate, and Nancy and Orville had responsibilities for the care of Nancy's younger sisters and brothers. Help came when her sister Margaret married Davies Batterton, a native of Bloomington and an 1847 graduate of Indiana University. Batterton had become head of the seminary, a position he retained for two years. In 1849 he became managing editor of the newspaper while his nineteen-year-old brother-in-law, William H. Hazelrigg, was publisher. Orville had given up the paper for a time. It should be noted, however, that William was living with Orville and Nancy when the census-taker called in 1850. That individual also found that eleven-year-old John J. Hazelrigg, Jr. was living with Davies and Margaret. Already Orville had taught John to set type and to do other work in the newspaper office.

Orville Thomson, meanwhile, had established his own printing office. Around the square merchants had stores and doctors and lawyers had offices, and Greensburg had several churches. Certainly there were people who needed printing, but the total population was only about 1200. It is not likely that Orville had enough work to keep him busy. In 1853 he bought the paper from Davies and William, only to sell it back to them three years later. As his obituary points out, Orville and his younger brother, Origen, tried to establish a newspaper in Lawrenceburg but gave up the attempt after two years. In 1860 Orville was working for *The Indianapolis Journal*. Meanwhile, Davies Batterton was also changing positions. He was establishing a drug store on the west side of the square; in 1856 he became one of the

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first Republican members of the Indiana House of Representatives. After renaming the paper *The Decatur Republican*, Davies and George sold it to John Hazelrigg and George W. Rhiver in 1858. John was nineteen years old and George about twenty-four, but both young men were ready for the demanding work of a newspaper.

There was much to command the attention of everyone in Greensburg during the 1850s. The state had abolished the seminaries in 1852 and in all communities which had had one there was debate over the kind of secondary school which should replace it. In Greensburg no decision was arrived at until after the Civil War; a high school opened in 1869. In 1854 the court house was torn down and a brilliant twenty-nine-year old architect, Edwin May, began construction of a new building. While it took him nearly six years to complete the court house and the editors of *The Republican* saw what he was doing almost every day, they had little to say about the project. They had much to say about another construction – the building of the Indianapolis and Lawrenceburg railroad through Greensburg in 1853, and they were as interested in a telegraph line. Davies Batterton on June 10, 1853, published in the paper (at the moment called the *Decatur Press*) a paragraph entitled “Telegraph Line:”

We want a telegraph line connecting this point with Cincinnati and the rest of the world – We must have it – we can’t do without it and we won’t. We are a fast people and it is necessary to our comfort and our business. How is the work to be done? Who wants to pave the way to a seat in Congress and immortalize himself by devising the means whereby this great want of the people can be supplied? Will the railroad company do it, or shall it be left to private enterprise? Hurry up the pancakes.

The pancakes were indeed hurried up. Builders of railroads found that the telegraph was essential for their operation. Private enterprise completed a telegraph line through Greensburg in 1854. At the same time the railroad was making it possible to send hogs and cattle directly to markets rather than driving them down the rutted, often muddy Michigan Road to markets in the Ohio river towns. Some entrepreneurs butchered hogs and cattle in Greensburg and shipped meat to dealers in Cincinnati and Lawrenceburg. Hogs had been a nuisance in the court house square, for owners let the animals wander where they wished. One wonders if some of these animals ended up as pork pickled in brine in barrels on the trains which passed through Greensburg. Certainly pork barrels became a feature of grocery stores in Indiana and elsewhere — and even influenced political jargon. Today we all know the meaning of “pork barrel politics,” although few of us have ever seen a pork barrel.

The railroad and telegraph meant that Greensburg newspapers could get news of national and international significance quickly, although reprinting articles from other newspapers and letters of travelers continued to be a practice of *The Republican* as it did of other small-town newspapers. The railroad also brought to Greensburg speakers from Cincinnati, and *The Republican* reported on the speeches they made.

Plans for a railroad far greater than the railroad through Greensburg was of overriding importance in American politics during the 1850s. A railroad to the west coast seemed absolutely necessary if the new state of California was to be integrated into the country. The Compromise of 1850 had seemed to settle the most serious questions about the slavery question in the huge Mexican Cession. California, rapidly settled as a result of the famous Gold Rush, had been admitted to the Union as a free state while the question of slavery remained ambiguous in the rest of the Mexican Cession. Debate began about the location of a railroad. Democratic Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois got the idea of repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1821 which had provided that the act admitting Missouri to the Union as a slave state would also prohibit introduction of slavery into the remaining Louisiana Purchase territory north of the line of 36° 30'. Prospective settlers were showing interest in the vast grass lands which would become Kansas and Nebraska, and Douglas thought it necessary that these areas be settled before a railroad could be built through them; but many Southerners preferred a more southerly route. Why not, Douglas reasoned, repeal the Compromise? Southern slave holders as well as Northern opponents of slavery would then be interested in settling the Great Plains and Southern statesmen would support a northern route. Congress did as he asked. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 repealed the Missouri Compromise. As a result in many communities throughout the North there were protests. Whigs began to leave their party, and many Democrats believed Douglas and other leaders had betrayed them. In Greensburg a meeting of Washington Township Democrats passed a resolution condemning the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Dissidents of both parties united in nominating a young Greensburg lawyer, Will Cumback, for the Fourth District seat in Congress.

*The Decatur Press*, soon to be *The Decatur Republican*, was much interested in Cumback’s career, and its editors were disappoint-

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ed when he failed to win reelection in 1856. The Democratic candidate was another Greensburg man, James B. Foley, a respected businessman and public servant who won easily enough over his young opponent. In fact it seemed as though the Democrats were recovering from the effects of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. James Buchanan, the Democratic Presidential candidate, defeated the Republican candidate, General John C. Fremont. Buchanan was inaugurated on March 4, 1857. Two days later the Supreme Court handed down the Dred Scott decision – probably the worst decision it ever made. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney declared that the Missouri Compromise had been unconstitutional all along. Southerners were overjoyed. This meant that Congress could not reenact a prohibition on slavery in any part of the Louisiana Purchase still in the territorial stage. A “lame duck,” Will Cumbback was in Congress when the Dred Scott decision was announced. The next day he addressed the House of Representatives, scathingly denouncing the high court’s decision. He soon won approval from Horace Greeley in the famous editor’s *New York Tribune*. Cumbback returned to Greensburg a recognized leader of the Republican Party in southeastern Indiana.

John Hazelrigg and George Rhiver were keen observers of politics. When Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate in the Illinois senatorial election of 1858, debated incumbent Senator Stephen A. Douglas in towns in seven Illinois congressional districts, the editors of *The Decatur Republican* carefully studied their speeches and published articles about them. The critical moment in the debate came when Lincoln challenged Douglas to clarify his position on slavery in the territories. Douglas’ reply was the Freeport Doctrine; he said that the people living in territories could keep slavery out if they chose by simply refusing to pass laws governing slavery. Hardly anyone was convinced. In the North Democrats lost confidence in him and began to listen more attentively to Republican leaders. In the South opinion turned against him for Southern slavery interests liked the Freeport Doctrine not at all. The Dred Scott decision had denied the right of the Federal government to interfere with the introduction of slavery, and that was the way they wanted it. Douglas seemed to be trying to give away what they thought they had won.

Of course *The Decatur Republican* editors could not foresee what would happen in 1860 and 1861, but in 1858 they read what Lincoln had said and decided he was their choice for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1860 and said so in *The Republican*. Later they claimed that their paper was the first Indiana newspaper to call for Lincoln’s nomination – a claim which has never been refuted. In early 1860 the front page of every issue called for the nomination and election of Abraham Lincoln and urged nomination and election of Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania as vice president. John and George never explained satisfactorily their support of Cameron. Perhaps too much was happening for them to consider their every move. On April 19 they suffered the loss of a wise counselor. Davies Batterton died in the thirty-sixth year of his age. This tragedy did not long slow their interest in the campaign. In May they went to Chicago for the Republican National Convention. Returning to Greensburg they told their readers they could not honestly say that they had helped persuade the convention to nominate Lincoln, but “at any rate we have the man of our choice and we are satisfied – entirely so.”

There was much to claim the attention of Hazelrigg and Rhiver after the convention adjourned. Enthusiastic Lincoln supporters in Greensburg and other Decatur County towns organized “Wide-Awakes” groups which often went elsewhere to march, sing, and shout Lincoln slogans. Cumbback, who knew Lincoln personally, campaigned for him in Indiana and in other states. As an elector-at-large in the Electoral College, he cast the state’s first vote for Abraham Lincoln. Throughout his life the Greensburg statesman would say that the day on which he cast that vote was the proudest day of his life. In Greensburg there was rejoicing as people learned of Lincoln’s election, but soon they had reasons for anxiety. Secession of the cotton-growing southern states began with South Carolina’s secession on December 20. Other states followed South Carolina’s example. At Montgomery, Alabama on February 8, 1861 the seceded states established a provisional government for the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was inaugurated as provisional president on February 18. Meanwhile the inauguration of Lincoln as President of the United States was approaching. On February 12 – his birthday – the President-elect and his party stopped in Greensburg. Lincoln spoke for about a minute to the crowd which gathered, and then the train moved on. In *The Decatur Republican* there was a brief account of the event – a rather disappointing report to anyone who has read the many outstanding articles in its files. *The Republican* would do better in regards to other dramatic events which soon occurred. On April 12 there came over the telegraph wires a report that at 4:30 A.M. that morning Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard had fired on Ft. Sumter in Charleston harbor. Within a few hours Major Robert Anderson, the Union commander, had been forced to surrender the fort.

Citizens of Greensburg and Decatur County were quick to respond to President Lincoln’s call for volunteers to fill state militia rolls. From the county came men who served in the famous Indiana Seventh Voluntary Infantry Regiment. For the Thomson, Hazelrigg, and Rhiver families it was of particular interest. Orville Thomson served in the regiment during both its three-month and three years phases. John Hazelrigg had married in 1860 George Rhiver’s sister, Zella, and it must have been as difficult for them to tell George goodbye as it had been to watch Orville board the train, although George was going to the Seventh Regiment as a member of the Greensburg band, he did not expect to be a combatant. In 1862 the War Department sent all bands home. George Rhiver died in Greensburg on April 21, 1862 a short time after returning home. John Hazelrigg would be sole editor of the paper until he sold it to Dr. S.H. Riley and

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associates in 1863. As editor he performed well, publishing excellent articles and letters from Orville and other soldiers. He himself served briefly in a regiment organized to pursue guerrillas in Kentucky. Appointment by President Lincoln as postmaster of Greensburg brought him much prestige in the community and in the local Republican party, but it also brought new responsibility. Then came another tragedy. John and Zella had a son whom they had named for George. In August 1863 the little boy fell ill. After six days of terrible suffering, the child died on August 19. Soon thereafter John sold the newspaper.

We know little about the paper from the time John Hazelrigg sold it in late 1863 until he again bought it and became publisher in January 1868. There are no files for 1865, 1866, and 1867, and there are only three 1864 issues. They are in the Indiana State Library. That library also has one issue of *The Decatur County Press* for July 4, 1866 – which Orville Thomson had edited. Orville's efforts at founding another newspaper were short lived. Two years later when John purchased *The Republic* – at the moment called *The Chronicle* – he asked Orville to become associate editor. Orville accepted. As we have noted, in 1868 John Hazelrigg renamed the paper *The Greensburg Standard*, a name it would retain for the rest of its history. John sold the paper in 1872; in 1878 he bought it back. Fortunately the frequent selling and buying back ceased in 1878. With the help of John's sons, John and Orville ran the paper until late 1893 when Orville's son-in-law, Luther Braden, became publisher. In 1918 Braden and E. J. Hancock became owners of *The Greensburg Daily News*, a paper which had begun publication in 1894. *The News* required much of them and the availability of an outstanding daily newspaper meant there was no longer a large demand for a weekly, even one as good as *The Standard*. In December 1925 *The Standard* ceased publication, exactly ninety years since John Thomson's *Repository* first appeared.

As editors of the *Standard*, 1868-1872 and 1878-1893, John Hazelrigg and Orville Thomson were as interested in the Republican party, temperance, and the Christian faith as they had been before the Civil War. The format of the paper was much better than had been that of *The Republican*. The type was better – clearer and larger. No longer did too much ink get on the press as it did so often during the 1860s. The paper was able to publish more national and international news, but the opportunities for personal involvement in great issues such as those John Hazelrigg and George Rhiver experienced before the war no longer seemed to occur.

Further consideration of *The Standard's* history must await another occasion; but it is necessary to stress that in the early 1880s and during the ten years from 1894 to 1904 Orville Thomson wrote his most important historical works. He was the author or co-author of essays and biographical sketches which in 1882 appeared in the *Atlas of Decatur Co., Indiana* published by J.H. Beers & Co. in Chicago. Many such county atlases appeared during the 1880's. In addition to maps they invariably included essays about the county history. The Decatur county atlas is one of the finest county atlases published in Indiana at that time, and Orville Thomson was the writer who contributed most to the making of the atlas. Any person interested in American history, whether his interest focuses on the nation, the state, or the county, will find much of value in this great book.

When Luther Braden became publisher of *The Standard*, he encouraged his father-in-law to write about early days in Fugit township, about the history of the county's newspapers, and about the Seventh Infantry. Orville published articles about all three subjects in the *Standard*, and he began to write a book about the Seventh Infantry. He completed the book in early 1904, printing it in his own shop and turning it over to a book binder who put it into a gray binding. When Orville began to sell it in March of that year he had trouble keeping up with demand. The book received high praise. No one said anything about its many typographical errors. Perhaps readers knew that the eighty-one-year-old author's eyesight was failing and he would not wear glasses.

In 1993 Butternut and Blue, a Baltimore firm which specializes in Civil War history, republished Orville Thomson's *Narrative of the Service of the Seventh Indiana Infantry in the War for the Union* as the second volume of its *Army of the Potomac* series. Butternut and Blue put the reprint into an attractive green binding but made no attempt to reproduce what Orville had printed on the original gray cover. There the title was 7<sup>th</sup> *Indiana Infantry in the War for the Union*. Below that title in a rectangle was this statement:

MUCH OF WHICH I SAW;

MUCH OF WHICH I AM.

Orville Thomson in these words said what he could also have said about his many historical articles. He did research into records in connection with several of them, and he interviewed other people, but his most important primary sources were his own recollections. While basing his articles largely upon memories, he structured each as a historical study. The great Greensburg newspaperman was a better historian than he himself knew.

*"I take great pleasure in announcing, that our new archive room in the addition at the Historical Society Museum will now be called the Orville Thomson Room, named after the really First Historian this county had. Without him we would not have the history of the early settlers and the beginnings of the county and this city, and for this we thank him and now we honor him. Thanks Orville."*

-Russell Wilhoit, page 2

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Tree and Shrub Club

We are very pleased to announce that with the landscaping of the Historical Society's Museum grounds, comes the unique opportunity for members to honor or memorialize a special person. We will have several trees and shrubs that may be dedicated. If you would like to dedicate one of the items in our landscaping to a special person or loved one, fill out the form below and send it to Tree and Shrub Club, Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240.

I would like to dedicate a (check one)

- \_\_\_ Large tree \$500.00
- \_\_\_ Small tree \$200.00
- \_\_\_ Large shrub/bush \$100.00
- \_\_\_ Small shrub/bush \$ 50.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (living) (deceased)

A plaque will be hung in the Historical Society Museum with names of donors and their honorees. For more information call Diana Springmier at 663-2997.

Our meeting room in the annex is in need of a large table and chairs. If you would be interested in donating a meeting table and chairs, please call David Miers or Diana Springmier. The donor's name will be engraved on a brass plate and attached to the table.

(We would be interested in a gently used set from one of the local businesses and or city/county offices.)

The Clock is ticking in our new gift shop

Reprints of **Harding's 1915 History of Decatur County** are in the gift shop. These are well-bound reprints of the originals which are selling on E-bay for as much as \$115.00 plus S&H. We ordered ten copies and are able to make them available to members for only \$90.00. Only a few left...Stop in and get your copy before they are all gone!

Just now available in the gift shop are the long-awaited 2005 Christmas Ornaments of the "Odd Fellows Home 1900" . These turned out to be lovely pearl ornaments and are only \$8.00. Very soon we hope to have our 2006 Christmas Ornament "Springhill Church". There are also ornaments from past years which are "on-sale" for bargain prices.

The 1886 maps of Greensburg are a delight to all who have seen them. They are available in the gift shop for \$20.00. The prints turned out so well that we couldn't be more pleased. These will make excellent gifts for the history buff in your family. Get several!!

Our new Gift Shop is well stocked with items for every price range. We have coffee mugs, key chains, postcards, pictures, coasters, Christmas note cards, and more! We open on September 16th. Stop by and Browse!

Historical Society Gift Shop

Opens September 16th

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 to 2:00, Saturdays and Sundays 1:00 to 4:00





# Historical Society of Decatur County

## The Bulletin

Vol. 11 No. 4

Winter 2006

Greensburg, Indiana

*Political campaigns are designedly made into emotional orgies which endeavor to distract attention from the real issues involved, and they actually paralyze what slight powers of cerebration man can normally muster.*

- James H. Robinson, 1937

### Toys, Trains and Christmas Things

Annual Christmas

Open House

December 10th 1:00—4:00 p.m.

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### Richard B. Thomson –First Mayor of Greensburg

Reprinted from August 22, 1902, *Greensburg News*

Edited by Russell Wilhoit, *Decatur County Historian*, Oct. 2006

R. B. Thomson, of East North street, died Friday morning at 1:10 o'clock. Funeral service from his late residence at 2 p.m. Sunday.



R B Thomson Tombstone

Important epochs in the private life of the deceased are told with characteristic modesty in the following sketch written by himself, on the leaf of a memorandum book, a short time ago, and kindly furnished a Daily News representative by his daughter, Mrs. William Bruner.

"I was born in Nicholas county, Ky., the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1816. Moved to this county with my father in 1827, and settled near Kingston. Came to Greensburg in 1833. Married Courtney A. McKinney Dec. 23, 1827, who died April 22, 1853. Married Barbary Gilchrist Dec. 27, 1857. R.B.T."

To this simple statement must be added – Died Aug. 15, 1902, aged 86 years 4 months 9 days.

The descendants of this patriarch number thirty-five, of whom thirty are living as follows: Children 8, living 5; grandchildren 18, living 16; great grandchildren 9.

The public life of Richard Thomson began with his residence in this city, which commenced in 1833. He was the first mayor of the city, and from that time on, during the period of his active life, he was closely associated with the interests of the city, and took an active part in all questions of public enterprise.

He was the contractor for several buildings which are landmarks of the city. Among these are to be mentioned: The court house, the West end school building, First National Bank block, Hoosier Hall, now the Grand Opera House, the old Thespian Town Hall, now the Silberberg corner. He and the late Bart Harney were amateur actors in the first play produced in this old Town Hall.

He dies at a ripe old age with all the honors of good citizenship accorded him and even before his death, this greatest of eulogies had been passed upon him by his neighbors, and all who knew him well: "He never had an enemy."

**\*\*R.B. Thomson is buried in South Park Cemetery in the old section, no more than 20 feet from Thomas Hendricks grave site. It is marked with a very small tombstone, which I believe needs to be replaced with a larger one to note who he really was and what he did. He was truly a humble man who did quite a bit for this city. RW**

*This is the fifth in a series of obituaries about some of the early pioneers and settlers and business men and women who help form the County into what it is today.*



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY DAVID MIERS

It's a wonderful feeling to have, knowing that we had an outstanding day for the dedication of the newly restored museum home and new addition that make up our Historical Society. There was more than twice the number of people we had expected on a nice warm sunny Sunday afternoon in early September for the dedication. It shows our community and the Board the interest there is in preserving the long, rich and colorful history of Decatur County. We dedicated the museum to "future generations."

In 2007 one of the Board's objectives will be to increase the number of members in the Society. To do so we will be looking for members to help us organize this effort. We have a small board, so in the future we will be asking our membership to be Chairs of various committees as well as being members on those committees. If you are asked to help, please give some consideration to working for your Society. Also, if you are asked please feel complimented as the board feels you can be of assistance to them. If you are interested in becoming more involved contact anyone on the Board of Directors.

The annual meeting is planned for February, 2007, date and time will be announced later and it will be held at the First Presbyterian Church. At this meeting we will be electing five new board members and officers for the coming year. So please make plans to attend.

Also, 2007 is the year we resume the popular 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday musicals. reed Schuster has many of them already organized and planned. Those Sundays are April 29<sup>th</sup>, July 29<sup>th</sup>, and September 30<sup>th</sup>. The December Musical coincides with our Christmas Open House on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

*From the Officers and Board of Directors here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

*David*

The new landscaping of the Historical Society Museum is beautiful, to say the least. Many of you have commented on how much you like it. The Tree and Shrub Club consists of members who have made a donation to purchase a tree or shrub and have it dedicated. The Board would like to take this time to sincerely thank those donors. This is a list of donors and the name or names the donation was dedicated to:

Bob and Rheadawn Metz	In Memory of	Trooper Bill Rayner
Jim and Jere Sturges	In Honor of	Friends and Loved Ones
Bill and Marge Hunter	In Memory of	Herbert C. Hunter
Kathryn Bailey	In Memory of	S. Jean Ernstes, S.P.
Norman and June Cook	In Memory of	Sheldon Smith
Norman and June Cook	In Honor of	Elizabeth A. Smith
Virginia Garvey	In Memory of	Richard H. Garvey
Dale and Teresa (Wickens) Bruns	In Memory of	James and Sarah Wickens
Dale and Teresa (Wickens) Bruns	In Memory of	Dr. Alfred and Margaret Bruns
James and Christine Bruns	In Honor of	Dale and Teresa (Wickens) Bruns
First Federal Savings & Loan	In Honor of	Jim Spillman and Stanley Reed
Mrs. Robert Kuchler	In Memory of	Betty Shumaker
Barbara Westhafer	In Memory of	Betty Shumaker
Bruns and Gutzwiler, Inc.	In Honor of	Historical Society of Decatur County



## Decatur County Historical Society Opens after Renovation

By David Grobauskas, Indiana University Journalism Student

The Decatur County Historical Society's museum is scheduled to re-open September 16, following a grand opening September 10. The museum has undergone an extensive renovation. A new addition to the Lathrop-Shannon house now provides much-needed display and archival space to house the Society's growing collection of historical items.

An anonymous bequest sparked the renovation and helped solve "a critical need for more storage and area display," according to Decatur County Historical Society Board President David Miers. The amount of funds given to and spent by the Society is, by the terms of the bequest, kept secret.

The house is now attached to a new addition connected to its back. The new addition, designed in a classical style by South Bend architect Thomas Gordon Smith, doubles the size of the museum. The addition offers a main exhibit room, a research/catalog room, a meeting room, and a gift shop. A kitchen, pantry, office area, and bathrooms are provided as well. Long-time members of the Society are pleased with the renovation.

Jane and Maurice Keith became involved following the 1976 national bicentennial. "I'm just amazed," Jane said about the additions. "I'm surprised. Very hard to imagine what it was before," Maurice said.

Plans for the main gallery include a focus on World War II home front life. Also items like V-mail, other correspondence home, and "booties," - which were dog-tag covers crocheted by women service members - represent some of the more personal articles on display.

A hallway joining the new addition and standing house gives a look at past Greensburg graduating classes. "What we'd like to do is alternate high-school pictures," said Charity Mitchell, a museum volunteer. The museum has a sequence of class pictures from about 1900 to 1930.

Each room in the house serves as an exhibit. One upstairs bedroom is being used to highlight the textile styles of the 1940's. A second room is devoted to childhood artifacts, including toys, of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main bedroom holds two of the museum's prized possessions: quilted William Craig coverlets. Other Craig coverlets have been displayed at the prestigious Smithsonian Museum.

Downstairs are living rooms, one featuring portraits of the Lathrop and Shannon families, and a kitchen. Items in the rooms cover diverse historical periods. Because of the wide variety of items spanning different eras, "a bit of serendipity," said Mitchell, is how items are received, and also displayed, when there is no overlapping theme.

The museum depends on volunteers to operate. The Historical Society is made up of six officers and six board members, all



The newly renovated Decatur County Historical Society Museum

volunteer. The museum has approximately thirty volunteers to help inside the museum with upkeep and tours.

For some, that volunteer work has become almost like a full-time job. The society has one paid part-time employee, Susan Ricke, who catalogs items into the computer and helps with grant writing. However, during the renovation, she's added thirty hours of volunteer work to prepare the museum for its re-opening as well as helping her sister, Nita McCoy, with the textile exhibit.

"It's consumed my life this year," said Russell Wilhoit, county historian and volunteer. Wilhoit deals with historical verification and has his own genealogical service outside the society.

The expansion of the museum leaves Wilhoit and his fellow volunteers with an archive of items not on display, but in need of storage. Shelves and boxes line the walls of the archive room containing items not displayed or not yet catalogued. The archive room will soon be named the Orville Thompson Archive room, after the county's first historian.

The Society is always on the look-out for new volunteers. Volunteering is determined by how much time the volunteer has, and what interest him/her most about local history. The mix of volunteers makes for an individualistic, yet convivial atmosphere.

"All of our volunteers have their own ideas," said Diana Springmeyer, volunteer museum director.

The museum draws its operational funds from donations, grants (through the Decatur County Community Foundation), member dues and gift shop sales. The society puts out a quarterly bulletin for members.

The addition's dedication was held during a grand re-opening on September 10, 2006. Normal operating hours are Sundays, 1:00-4:00 p.m. and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, 10:00-2:00 p.m. Admission is free.

The Bulletin

Board of Directors Makes Changes in Dues Schedule

At the October meeting of the Board of Directors, a decision was passed to increase the dues of the Historical Society of Decatur County.

New membership rates are as follows:

Student	\$ 10.00 per year
Individual	\$ 15.00 per year
Family	\$ 25.00 per year
Patron	\$ 50.00 per year
Historian	\$100.00 per year
Lifetime	\$500.00 (one-time payment)

All new members would receive:

- Membership card
- Quarterly newsletter
- Invitations to Society Events and Programs

Dues invoices will be mailed in October. All memberships expire on December 31st (except Lifetime Memberships). For new members, dues paid after July 1<sup>st</sup> would apply to the following year.

Renewal memberships for 2007 can be mailed in now. New members are welcome.

Name

Phone

Address

City

State

E-mail (optional)

\*Circle the type of membership above

HOOSIER SALON ART EXHIBIT NOVEMBER 12- DECEMBER 3

The Arts & Cultural Council of Decatur County in cooperation with the Tree City Artists and Friends is proud to present a traveling exhibit from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Exhibition of Fine Arts of the prestigious Hoosier Salon. The exhibit of works by Indiana artists will be in the gallery room of the recently renovated Decatur County Historical Society Museum, 222 N. Franklin Street in Greensburg from November 12 - December 3. The exhibit will be open during regular museum hours, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Special visits to view the exhibit can be arranged by calling the Arts & Cultural Council at (812) 663-8600.

The Hoosier Salon juried exhibition features two-dimensional and three-dimensional works in a medley of styles and media by Hoosier artists. This year 537 works were submitted, from which 180 were selected for the state show. A portion of these selected works will be in the local exhibit. All works are for sale.

This exhibit is part of the "Arts for All 2006-2007" program series of the Arts & Cultural Council of Decatur County. Support for this series has been provided by the Decatur County Community Foundation, Vectren, Duke Energy, the Columbus Area Arts Council, the Indiana Arts Commission, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

## *A Mysterious Miracle of Christmas Past*

By Nick Williams

The world lost a good man early this year—a man who was also a gifted musical mentor to many Greensburg youth for over a decade. Ben Niles taught hundreds of zealous, outdoor and activity-minded young pranksters that it was okay to love music too. The Greensburg High School band and chorus were under this man's direction, and he also found time to lead the choir at the Greensburg United Methodist Church for many years.

Numerous trophies, ribbons, and other awards were claimed as Pirate booty by this man and his minions before he moved on to Warren Central High School in Indianapolis to apply his musical influence there.

Ben Niles was a tall, thin man with severely slicked-back dark hair and a pencil-thin mustache which heralded his precise inclination to detail and perfection. However, "precise inclinations" are seldom appreciated by prankster-minded teenagers. One Christmas, in particular, was especially frustrating for Director Niles.

In mid-September, 1957, plans were announced for a Christmas cantata which would be the finale for the annual school Christmas concert on December 12<sup>th</sup>. This particular cantata, however, was not the usual "meant for young voices" opus. This work was a thirty-plus page medley of passages from the Bible, catchy dance tunes, the usual Christmas melodies, fine old English carols, and Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. This would truly be a challenge!

In fact Mr. Niles had mentioned to others in the educational system that it would truly be a "miracle" if everything came together as the cantata was written. ("I have as much of the spirit of prophecy in me as the swans..." Plato) Still in defiance of all common sense, the pristine cantata books were distributed to seventy-two "anxious" students during choral class in September.

Piano accompanists Susan Kutchback, Dorothy Small, and Judy Horton led the soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone-bass sections through warm-up exercises during the first week of practice, but during the second week some of the cantata books were missing, and people had to double-up to rehearse their parts. The third week proved to be even more frustrating as, again, half of the remaining books disappeared. In fact, during the whole month of October, each of the choral sections had only two books per group to share.

Mr. Niles, as I indicated, prided himself in his ardent devotion to perfection, so he was beside himself. He paced, and while carrying his ever-present Listerine bottle, queried himself

and anyone within earshot as to where the cantata books could have gone. He then stated during practice, "We are all surely going to suffer through a most embarrassing and terrible Christmas Concert experience if our cantata books do not return immediately. Please, people, help find our books. No punishment will be forthcoming, no grades will be docked, and your parents won't be told. We simply must have our books back!"

The following week was Thanksgiving, and only six books remained: one for Susan, our accompanist, and one each for the sopranos, altos, tenors, and bass-baritones. Fortunately, there was also a book available for Mr. Niles. Each group huddled on the music room risers like street carolers in a 19<sup>th</sup> century Currier and Ives calendar. We singers struggled with squinting and watery eyes to make out the little black notes on all those pages.

Each group met independently to rehearse parts, but even the six remaining books slowly disappeared. By the week preceding the concert, only one book was left...and Mr. Niles held it tightly in one hand as he directed with the other. Our entire chorus really had worked diligently to learn the Christmas cantata, but fear and butterflies held the entire group captive during the dress rehearsal.

The night of December 12<sup>th</sup> found the high school auditorium filled with happy Christmas patrons. As the chorus entered the stage, Mr. Niles relinquished the lone remaining copy of the Christmas cantata to our accompanist, and the Greensburg High School Chorus "miraculously" sung a very difficult work from memory.

After receiving two standing ovations from the townspeople who were completely unaware of the mysterious circumstances of the missing books which had made possible the "perfect" singing of the cantata, Mr. Niles returned to the music room through happy, glad-handing, parents and friends. There outside the room was a surprise: a large Christmas-wrapped box with a giant Greensburg Pirate blue and white ribbon was addressed to "Director Ben Niles"!

Inside the box was a note which read, "Merry Christmas! Here is the gift you have been wishing for." Inside the box were seventy-one hardly used cantata books.

Ben, you were an inspiring, if fastidious, music director from whom we all learned to maximize our abilities, and thereby fulfill your foretold "Miracle of Christmas in 1957."

Thanks for the lesson, and may you rest in peace.



Merry Christmas!



## Orville Thomson's Sardinia Letter, With commentary by Calvin D. Davis

Sardinia, Indiana May 9, 1871

I promised you a few "notes by the way" and, by the politeness of Dr. Riley, send you this.

The Engineer corps on the survey line of the Evansville & Bell-fountain Railroad began work here yesterday, and ran out about a mile. We met here two Messrs. Blish of Seymour, one of them an engineer and another a Director of the road, also Mr. Pattison of the same place. They seem very sanguine of the success of the road. The vote of the Evansville last week, (1458 majority) directing the council to take stock in the road, is an encouraging sign. The counties from Seymour to Evansville are afire for the work, and there is little question that all will vote stock or donations.

The people here are in a perfect fever for the work, and all prefer the Greensburg route, as they desire communication not only with the outer world at large, but with the county-seat. The survey from here will first lean a little to the west of a direct line, so as to avoid the breaks of Sand creek, and then lean out again to get into line. It will however, be very nearly an air line. The distance from here to Greensburg, on this line, will vary little from 14 miles. From here to Seymour is just 20 miles.

This is my first visit here for fourteen years, and I find that the country has made rapid strides in improvement in that time. The farmers all give evidence of enterprise and intelligence, and growing wealth. The village is not up with the country, but will make a fair place, if it gets this road.

It has one store, (Harper's-a regular country store, with a big stock, in which can be found almost anything a person can want, from a blacksmith's bellows to a shoe peg) and which sold \$75,000 worth of goods last year. Mr. Ed. L. Farran, who has been a clerk in this house, himself (sold during the nine months ending March 31, \$20,859 of goods)

There are also the several mechanic shops-shoe maker, blacksmith, wagon-makers, carpenters, and two pill vendors.

The tile factory of Mr. Leander Meredith's is perhaps the largest in the state, (almost 275 feet in length of shed) a fine large yard, and in manufacturing largely. The farmers around are tiling out their wet lands, and are making this section one of the best farming regions in this county

There was a marriage in high life at the M.E. Church here on Sunday afternoon last: by Rev. S.S. Tinch of Mooreshill, the Rev. Preston Rice, a student of Mooreshill College, to Miss Josie, daughter of Rev. John Shaffer, of this vicinity. Mr. Rice is a young divinity student, and is in charge of the Dillsboro, Dearborn County Circuit. He is spoken of as a rising young man.

A large steam saw mill is now in course of erection, in the edge of the town, preparatory to cutting ties for the railroad. The corn crop is generally planted. Most of the fruit in these parts was destroyed by the frost of two weeks ago. Finest prospects for wheat

ever seen about here. We had a slight rain last night, and it is being followed up with a little more of the same kind this morning.

I neglected mentioning, in the proper place, the large flouring mill of Mr. Thomas Smith in the west side of town. It uses three sets of stones, makes a superior quality of flour, and is getting about all the work it can do.

The whiskey shop that was here has taken unto itself wheels, and gone to Alert. The Building where it was, a large two-story frame, has been taken possession of by the Good Templars, above and Mr. Fritter as a shoe shop on the ground floor. The Good Templar' Lodge numbers near 100 members, and is an active Lodge. ORV.

By Orville Thomson, May 11, 1871, correspondent of The Greensburg Standard

### Commentary

Considering Orville Thomson's achievements as an editor and historian, one should keep in mind that he was, first of all, a careful, thoughtful reporter. His Civil War letters published in the Greensburg Republic are among the most important documents we have concerning Decatur County's military history. Returning to civilian life, he published letters from places he visited. One of the best was the "Sardinia Letter" of May 9, 1871, published in the Standard, two days later.

The fact that Thomson had not been in Sardinia for fourteen years is significant; travel was easier in the northern part of the county. There were more roads and there was the railroad from Indianapolis to Cincinnati which had been built through Greensburg in 1853. One wonders what residents of Sardinia and Westport thought when they learned of the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory Point, Utah, on May 10, 1869, completing the great transcontinental railroad. They must have asked why it was taking so long to have a few miles of railroad track built from Greensburg to towns south of the county line. Readers of Thomson's letter probably concluded that the railroad would soon be built. They were to be disappointed; it was not ready for use until 1880.

Of particular interest is Thomson's brief paragraph about Leander Meredith's tile factory; tiles were essential for transforming the flat wet plains of Indiana into productive farm land. Thomas A. Hendricks, one of nineteenth-century Indiana's greatest political leaders, never forgot what the area was like in the 1820's and 1830's when he was growing up in Shelbyville and some times visiting his uncle in Greensburg, for whom he was named. (The founder of Greensburg). Speaking at the laying of the cornerstone of the Indiana State Capitol in 1880, he recalled the giant trees and dense undergrowth which farmers found so difficult to clear, and then there were other problems:

"The abundant rainfall, so great a blessing now, was then a trouble and a hindrance. Over the great forest plain, both flowage and evaporation was obstructed, almost prevented, and the water filled the soil and stood

(Continued on page 7)



(Continued from page 6)

upon the surface. Drainage, now so universal, was then impossible. Obstruction to improvement was not the greatest evil that attended that natural condition. The summer heats loaded the atmosphere with malaria”

Digging ditches was an important part of life for pioneer farmers, but it is not likely many farmers who settled in central Indiana before the Civil War had had any prior experience with land that was as flat and wet. Authors of Indiana’s best general histories have had little to say about this problem, so basic a part of the state’s economic development in the nineteenth century. Logan Esarey, however in his classic “History of Indiana” published in 1914, told of the efforts of Dr. R.T. Brown of Montgomery County to persuade farmers to put tiles in ditches. In a footnote Esarey told of an address at the State Fair in 1853 by the famous editor of the New York Tribune, Horace Greeley, in which Greeley urged Indiana farmers to plow as deep as possible and to give special efforts to creating good drainage systems.

Writers on farming in the middle years of the nineteenth century gave much attention to drainage. Charles W. Dickerman who had a farm near Philadelphia published a book entitled “How to make a Farm pay or The Farmer’s book of practical information” in 1868 in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis. He called his first chapter “Drainage,” and in the first sentence declared that “under draining will improve three -fourths of the land under cultivation in this county; and full one-half will abundantly pay for the expense”. He included a map showing how to space tile ditches, a page with pictures of several kinds of tiles, and a page with pictures of spades farmers could take to their blacksmiths for changes to make them more efficient for ditching.

Whether anyone in Decatur County in the nineteenth century every read Dickerman’s book I do not know, but the laying of tiles

was long part of the work of farmers in Jackson and Clay Townships and in parts of the other townships as well. When Thomson again wrote about Sardinia and Jackson township in the “Atlas of 1882,” he told of how “under draining by tiling” had turned the “burr oak flat—a black, wet kind of land” into the “very best quality of land.” It was also doing something else of which Thomson may not have been aware; it was ending the menace of malaria. Hendricks, like almost everyone else in 1880, was in error when he said that malaria came from the heated air which arose from the wet lands, but he was not wrong in associating the disease with these lands. From stagnant pools come swarms of Anopheles mosquitoes carrying plasmodia from person to person. These single cell parasites cause malaria. Americans in the Nineteenth Century used enormous quantities of quinine to control the disease, but their need for the drug lessened as the century drew near its close. The use of ceramic tiles made by such manufacturers as Leander Meredith drained the wet lands and deprived mosquitoes of the breeding places.

Not many farmers today have to dig ditches with spades and then lay tiles. Ditching machines do that kind of work and plastic tubes have largely replaced tiles. Sometimes, though, farmers dig up porous, ceramic tiles laid long ago, reminders of the hard work of nineteenth century farmers which transformed the forested, wet lands of central Indiana into one of the world’s great agricultural areas. This heritage is of immense importance; unfortunately many people today often seem to have little appreciation for the region’s agricultural greatness as they hasten to build housing developments, commercial centers and factories.

By Calvin D. Davis,

Professor Emeritus of History

Duke University - October 2006

**Correction:** In our 2007 “Doors of Decatur County” calendar the Fifth Sunday dates are listed incorrectly. Fifth Sundays for 2007 are April 29th, July 29th and September 30th. Please mark these dates down.

## World War II Interviews

The Decatur County Historical Society Museum volunteers are currently conducting a series of interviews with World War II veterans concerning their war experiences. To date, interviews with Melvin Robbins, John Stewart, Bill Ford, and Oliver Hunter have been videotaped. Lois Carol McCormack has been arranging the interviews which are conducted by George Granholt, and Carrie Shumaker does the videotaping, editing and formatting. Additional interviews are planned, and videotapes will be a part of the Museum’s archives. Be sure to check them out





**Towns and Villages of Decatur County:**  
**Reprints of Articles from early Twentieth Century Papers**  
**Compiled and Edited by Russell Wilhoit**

## **Enterprising Little Adams**

In its Daily Life and Past History –

A thriving Settlement of 400

*Article reprinted from Sept 27, 1913 - Greensburg Standard, edited and added to by Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian, Oct. 2006*

*This is the fifth article in a series about the little towns in Decatur County, next issue we will move over to Jackson Twp,*

Adams, Ind., Sept. 27 – Adams, an enterprising town of four hundred people, is located just five miles northwest of Greensburg, and running through the town are the Big Four steam railroad and the I. & C. interurban line.

Aaron Womack laid the town off fifty-eight years ago – in 1855.

It has some elegant homes, splendid schools, churches, natural gas, Odd Fellows' hall, opera house and many things to the credit of the inhabitants of the little town, who compose as fine, loyal and law abiding people as can be found anywhere, and noted are they for their enterprise, thrift and industry.

Adams does a large amount of business in buying and selling grain, in the dry goods, grocery, hardware, implement, drug and other lines of business.

### **Auctioneer**

Adams has only one auctioneer but he'll "do in a pinch." His name is Col. A. Frank Eubank (1863-1945\*) and his fame as one of the best auctioneers in this section of the country is not merely local, but state wide. Certainly he "will do in a pinch." for that is just the time a seller needs help—when he's in a pinch—and he needs the very best of help to cry his sales, and that's the kind he gets when the services of Col. Eubank are employed.

### **Secret Orders**

But one secret order in the town and that the Odd Fellows, who have a membership of one hundred, own a large and comparatively new building, two stories high, with a splendidly equipped opera house on the first floor and an elegant lodge room on the second. The lodge is in a flourishing condition, and the membership is loyal.

### **Schools**

The writer is in possession of a bit of excellent history concerning the schools of Adams and vicinity, and deems it worthy a place in this connection.

The first school house for then "Adams District," was built in 1852, and was a hewn log house situated about a mile northwest of the town of Adams, and in the year 1858 a two story brick building, containing two rooms and a chapel hall, was built, and graded school established. The first principal of the school was L. H. Marshall; he was followed by E. T. J. Jordan, J. J. Mull, Ira G. Stark, and J. W. M. Fletcher, in the order named.

In September, 1877, the town was incorporated for school purposes, but the school was taught only one term under the corporation authorities. Confusion and jealousies arising among the officers and citizens, it was determined by a unanimous vote to abolish the corporation and return under the management of the township trustee.

### **Present School Building**

In 1908 the present school building was erected, and it is a splendid and elegant brick, six school rooms, two large laboratory rooms in the basement, slate roofed and heated by steam. The schools have a large and attractive play grounds.

A very valuable library has been installed in the office room, and consists of reference works, and standard reading circle books. For this most valuable and elegant library no little credit is due teachers and pupils, who gave a school play last year and devoted the proceeds to benefit of library, and they will probably give another play before the end of the present term.

### Corps of Instructors

Prof. A. R. Turner is principal of the school, and has charge of the High school department. He teaches High School subjects in the three years of High School, also supervises the grade department. The agriculture work is also taught by him in the seventh and eighth grades. There is an enrollment of seventeen High School pupils.

Miss Nettie Stone has charge of room four, seventh and eighth grader, with an enrollment of seventeen.

Room three, fifth and sixth grades, is presided over by Miss Mary Nation, and the enrollment numbers thirty-eight pupils. She also teaches music and domestic science in the seventh and eighth grades, and in High School.

Miss Mabel Leffler (1850-1926\*) is the instructor in room two, grades three and four, wherein there are twenty-five pupils.

Room one, grades one and two has thirty pupils with Miss Ely Avery instructor.

The total enrollment is one hundred and twenty-seven pupils.

The Adams schools are in a flourishing condition, have a faithful corps of teachers and rank along with the best in the county.

### Churches and Church History

Ninety years ago—May 23, 1823 the Mt. Moriah Baptist church was organized and a building erected just one mile northeast of Adams, and in 1843 a large number of members withdrew and organized Hebron Baptist church and located it just in the west side of Adams, and in 1865 the two churches—Hebron and Mt. Moriah—united and then build a house of worship in the town of Adams, out of the brick of the former church houses, thus not only reuniting the membership but uniting the buildings as well, and today the Baptist of Adams and vicinity, worship in that same building with Rev. J. A. Ellis preaching for them every other Sunday. Truly, “in union there is strength.”

The Christian church at Adams was organized by Jacob Wright in 1859, and has a neat, comfortable brick building, erected in 1872.

So far as is known, only two of the charter members survive, namely: Mrs. Martha Pleak, of Adams, and Mrs. Belle Aldrich, of Greensburg. The church is at present without a pastor.

The Methodist church at Adams was organized by Rev. Jesse Brockway, in 1859, with only seven members, and the house was erected in 1862, during Rev. J. B. Lathrop's ministry. Rev. J. A. Gardner is the present pastor.

### Business Men

The business houses and enterprises of the town, together with the names of those who conduct them, are as follows:

A general store is conducted by Davis & Toothman.

A. R. Coy ( 1881-1926 \*) deals in confectioneries and operates a barber shop.

A shoe repair shop is managed by I. H. Burton (1858-1918\*).

Walter R. Marshall (1879-1960\*) is proprietor of a general store.

General hardware and implements are sold by John Lipscome.

The general store of J. J. Mull & Bro., is operated by John Mull (1851-1919\*).

Daniel W. Hazelrigg ( 1872-1933\*\*\*is the druggist.

The elevator and coal yards are presided over by Albert Boling.

Mrs. Ellen Longstreet (1855-1915\*) manages the hotel.

Edward Hoffman (1858-1938\*) does shoe repair work.

A general meat market is run by Newt. Coy (1875-1950\*).

Richey & Coy do a general blacksmithing business.

Frank Wiley is the cabinet maker and wood workman.

Blacksmithing and horse shoeing are done by John Inman.

Walker & Wright are the gas well diggers.

Livery Barn, owned by Wm. Johnson and operated by Joe Burton (1885-1961\*).

Charles Adkins (1844-1915\*) is the veteran blacksmith of the town.

Willard Turner, (1891-1969\*) automobile repair shop.

John D. Walker, (1856-1935\*) house and sign painter.

Dr. Morton Tanner, (1867-1946\*) veterinary surgeon.

Raymond Ward wields the paint brush.

Dr. Milton A. Tremain, M. D. (1876-1965 \*\*\*) *\*Editors note-he was my doctor when I was a small boy in the early 1950's, I remember my parents taking me over to Adams to see him.*

The army of carpenters in Adams consists of James Inman, (1862-1917\*), H. O. McCoy, C. A. McMillan (1887-1919\*\*), Adolphus Bennett (1867-1914\*\*\*) and Walter Crist

Notes:

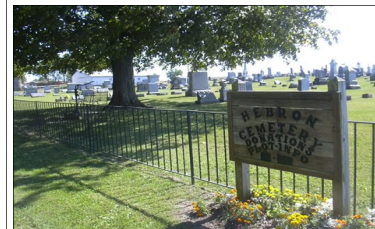
*\*buried in Mt. Hebron Cemetery-Adams*

*\*\* buried- Milford Cemetery-Milford*

*\*\*\* buried in South Park Cemetery-Greensburg*



Mt. Moriah Baptist Church—2006



Hebron Cemetery on 300 N just west of town in Clay Twp.



Railroad to Saint Paul looking north-west from the middle of town. The trestle is barely visible in the distance. The once busy inter-urban ran along the right side all the way to Indianapolis.



Commonly called "Barker's Bridge" over Clifty Creek on 300N just past Hebron Cemetery. ( So named by locals since Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Barker lived next to the bridge.)



Dr. Tremain's office—2006  
Near 3131 North Couty Road 430 W

*I have captioned these pictures for Russell having grown up in Adams.*

Susan (Simmonds) Ricke

The Historical Society Museum invites you to an Old-Fashioned Christmas at 222 North Franklin Street. We are pleased to display ornaments on our Christmas tree made by students in Lynne Saler's fourth grade art classes at North Decatur Elementary.

The Museum is open to the public on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Sunday hours are 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The annual Open House is December 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. It will feature seasonal music, antique toys, refreshments and a Lionel Train exhibit by local train enthusiasts.

Also: The Eastern and Pacific O-gauge Train Club from Indianapolis will be in the Presbyterian Church meeting room on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 to 2:00 and on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 4:00. They will also display on the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.



### Tree and Shrub Club

We are very pleased to announce that with the landscaping of the Historical Society's Museum grounds, comes the unique opportunity for members to honor or memorialize a special person. We still have several trees and shrubs that may be dedicated. If you would like to dedicate one of the items in our landscaping to a special person or loved one, fill out the form below and send it to Tree and Shrub Club, Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240.

I would like to dedicate a (check one)

\_\_\_ Large tree \$500.00

\_\_\_ Small tree \$200.00

\_\_\_ Large shrub/bush \$100.00

\_\_\_ Small shrub/bush \$ 50.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

(living)

(deceased)

A plaque will be hung in the Historical Society Museum with names of donors and their honorees.

### *Museum Gift Shop has Unique Gifts for Christmas, Birthdays, and Anniversaries!*

Reprints of **Harding's 1915 History of Decatur County** are in the gift shop. These are well-bound reprints of the originals which are selling on E-bay for as much as \$115.00 plus S&H. We ordered ten copies and they sold out so quickly that we had to order more. We are pleased to be able to make them available for \$90.00. Only a few left...Stop in and get your copy before they are all gone!

Still available in the gift shop are the beautiful 2005 Christmas Ornaments of the "Odd Fellows Home 1900." These turned out to be lovely pearl ornaments and are only \$8.00. Our 2006 Christmas Ornament is "Springhill Church." These are beautiful two sided ornaments which show the original church and the current church. There are also ornaments from past years which are "on-sale" for bargain prices. Don't miss out on these, once they are gone, they are gone. Great for the collector in the family.

Our new Gift Shop is well stocked with items for every price range. We have coffee mugs, key chains, postcards, pictures, coasters, Christmas note cards, and more! Stop by and Browse!

New and very popular are the Doors of Decatur County calendars for 2007. These calendars are illustrated with beautiful pictures by Tom Barker of actual decorated and interesting front doors taken right here in Decatur County. A must have!

The 1886 maps of Greensburg are a delight to all who have seen them. They are available in the gift shop for \$20.00. The prints turned out so well that we couldn't be more pleased. These are suitable for framing and are sure to make excellent gifts for the history buff in your family. Get several!!

Memberships to the Society also make excellent gifts!

Come in and Browse!

**Historical Society Museum Gift Shop**

**222 N. Franklin**

**Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays 10:00 to 2:00 ; Sundays 1:00 to 4:00**

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**“The Bulletin”**

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Vice-President: Tom Barker  
Treasurer: Debbie Greiwe  
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Recording Secretary: Linda Volk  
Membership Secretary: Rheadawn Metz

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Ed Deiwert	

Society's Agent

William H. Robbins

Museum Director

Diana Springmier

Historical Society of Decatur County

Museum Hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 10:00 to 2:00  
Sundays 1:00 to 4:00 - Call to set up a group tour  
Museum phone: 663-2764  
Email: [dechissoc@core.com](mailto:dechissoc@core.com)

Museum est. 1984  
Society est. 1957



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